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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A POLITICAL HISTORY OF SASKATCHEWAN, 1905 - 1929

by

© JAMES WILLIAM BRENNAN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled A POLITICAL HISTORY OF SASKATCHEWAN, 1905 - 1929, submitted by James William Brennan in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

The main intent of this study is to provide a comprehensive political history of Saskatchewan for the years 1905-1929, a period of uninterrupted Liberal rule, and to do so within the context of the one-crop economy, and rural and multicultural society, which together set the province apart from its prairie neighbours. These years marked the beginning of partisan competition along traditional party lines, a significant departure from the practice of avoiding federal party divisions in local elections which had prevailed in the North-West Territories. Energetic development policies, the efforts of the partisan civil service and a sensitivity to the wishes of the organized farmers and the province's sizeable ethnic and religious minorities enabled the Liberals to entrench themselves firmly in power after 1905. The Conservatives, who constituted the main opposition until 1917, wavered between attempting to forge a broadly based coalition that would include both the native-born and the immigrant, and seeking to capitalize on racial and religious tensions as a means of securing office. Neither propelled the Conservatives into power, and the party virtually disappeared after the war.

The strains inherent in an unstable wheat economy gave rise to two new parties after 1917. That neither the Nonpartisan League nor the Progressives were able to secure control of the government at Regina was due as much to the lack of harmony within the farmers'

movement itself as to the adroit manoevring of successive Liberal premiers. Where once there had been a single monolithic farmers' organization, after 1921 there were two. The more radical Farmers' Union of Canada eschewed direct political action from the outset, and a dispute over the practice of multiple office holding distracted the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association from politics and sapped its energies and its numerical strength.

The revival of the Conservative party in the late 1920's coincided with a resurgence of nativist sentiment in Saskatchewan. Some of its leaders sought to profit from it, and their efforts were rewarded on 6 June 1929. Racial and religious cleavages eroded the Liberals' once strong political base among moderate English-speaking Protestants, Roman Catholics and European-born immigrants; Premier J. G. Gardiner's extreme partisanship alienated agrarian support; and twenty-four years of uninterrupted Liberal rule came to an end.

The year 1929 also marked the end of the settlement era in Saskatchewan. In a province as dependent as Saskatchewan on a single staple crop, governments early recognized the need to secure a more diversified balance in the economy and end the cycle of boom and bust. Though it had become Canada's third largest province Saskatchewan could not boast a stable economy, either agriculturally or industrially, at the end of this period, and the disaster that lay ahead would bear down all the harder because of this.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many have contributed, in large and small measure, to the successful completion of this study of Saskatchewan politics. In particular the author wishes to acknowledge the financial assistance provided by the Canada Council, the J. S. Ewart Foundation at the University of Manitoba and the Department of History at the University of Alberta. The staffs of the various archives and libraries visited during the course of the research were all most helpful, and none more so than the Regina and Saskatoon offices of the Archives of Saskatchewan. The author is also grateful to the Saskatchewan Power Corporation for permission to use C. O. White's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, "Saskatchewan Builds an Electrical System," and to Dr. Norman Ward for permission to consult the papers of the Hon. James Garfield Gardiner. Dr. L. H. Thomas, Allan R. Turner and D. H. Bocking were among those who offered suggestions, or simply listened, and Marilyn Bickford and Linda Mahler typed the final draft. The author is also deeply indebted to Dr. L. G. Thomas, whose patient supervision and helpful encouragement have contributed immeasurably to this work.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AS	Archives of Saskatchewan
C.A.R.	*Canadian Annual Review of Public Affairs*
C.C.F.	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
C.E.F.	Canadian Expeditionary Force
C.N.R.	Canadian National Railways
C.P.G.	*Canadian Parliamentary Guide*
C.P.R.	Canadian Pacific Railway
F.U.C.	Farmers' Union of Canada
G.W.V.A.	Great War Veterans' Association
K.K.K.	Ku Klux Klan
M.L.A.	Member of the Legislative Assembly
M.P.	Member of Parliament
N.N.P.P.A.	New National Policy Political Association
O.B.U.	One Big Union
PAC	Public Archives of Canada
PMAA	Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta
QUA	Queen's University Archives
R.C.M.P.	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
R.N.W.M.P.	Royal North-West Mounted Police
S.A.R.M.	Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities
S.G.G.A.	Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association
SLAO	Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly Office
T.G.G.A.	Territorial Grain Growers' Association

T.L.C.	Trades and Labour Congress of Canada
U.F.A.	United Farmers of Alberta
U.F.C.(S.S.)	United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section)
W.C.T.U.	Women's Christian Temperance Union
W.G.G.A.	Women Grain Growers' Association
Y.M.C.A.	Young Men's Christian Association

INTRODUCTION

The province of Saskatchewan, and particularly its politics, has long attracted its share of scholarly interest. From Seymour Martin Lipset's pioneer study of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation to David E. Smith's recent work on the Liberal party, scholars in Canada and abroad have sought to explain the apparent contradictions in Saskatchewan's political behaviour. In the minds of many observers the province has acquired a reputation for political radicalism. Saskatchewan voters elected fifteen members of the Progressive party in the 1921 federal election, and continued to send Progressives to Ottawa throughout the decade. In 1933 another new party, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, drew up its political charter at a convention in Regina, and eleven years later swept Saskatchewan to form the first socialist government in North America. The C.C.F. held the province for two decades and its successor, the New Democratic Party, has enjoyed similar success at the polls.

That there has been a strong and enduring tradition of political nonconformity in Saskatchewan cannot be denied, but at the same time it must not be forgotten that one of Canada's traditional parties has enjoyed a remarkable longevity there. The Liberal party formed the first government in 1905 and remained in power for twenty-four years, surviving even the Progressive onslaught of the early 1920's when Liberal governments in Alberta and Manitoba were swept away. The Liberals finally met defeat at the hands of a resurgent Conservative party which managed to deprive them of their majority without securing one itself. Instead the Conservatives entered into a loose alliance with the Progressives and proceeded to form a Co-operative Government which had the misfortune to come into office on the eve of the Depression. Saskatchewan voters rejected the Conservatives at the first opportunity and restored the Liberals to power for another decade. The rise of the C.C.F. represented a major challenge to the Liberals, but even after 1944 the party was able to maintain itself as the only viable alternative to socialism.

Inspired by the dramatic increase in support which the C.C.F. experienced during the Second World War, two Americans, Dean E. McHenry and S. M. Lipset, came to Canada to examine this socialist phenomenon in North America. McHenry's *The Third Force in Canada* seems rather dated now, more than a quarter century after its publication in 1950. Based primarily on interviews with prominent party members and research in C.C.F. national and provincial office files, the book offered only a superficial analysis of the origins of the C.C.F. and its rise to power in Saskatchewan.[1]

Far more impressive was Lipset's *Agrarian Socialism*, which first appeared in 1950 as well.[2] Where McHenry took as his subject the fortunes of the new party in both the national and provincial spheres, Lipset focused his attention on Saskatchewan. In seeking to explain what might be regarded as an apparent paradox, the choice of a socialist government by a society almost totally agricultural in composition, Lipset pointed to the development in Saskatchewan of a "powerful, organized, class-conscious agrarian movement ...." Agrarian radicalism, in Saskatchewan as elsewhere, directed its attack against big business domination: the railways, the banks and the grain trade, and "as a result, a large proportion of the farming population supported an agrarian socialistic program designed to eliminate private profits by governmental or co-operative action before an explicitly socialist party appeared upon the scene."[3] After the First World War this agrarian radicalism was channelled through the farmers' own political organization, the Progressive party. The real significance of the party lay not in the fact that it was the expression of a self-conscious class demanding deep-rooted changes, for Lipset readily admits that it was not, but rather that it alienated farmers from their old party loyalties. Although the Progressives ultimately failed, chiefly because they were more a product of immediate discontent than of long-term crisis, and many returned to the

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[1] D. E. McHenry, *The Third Force in Canada: The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, 1932-1948* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950).

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[2] S. M. Lipset, *Agrarian Socialism: The Co-operative Commonwealth Federation in Saskatchewan* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950).

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19, 71.

Liberal fold, others continued to work for a new party.[4] Their efforts bore fruit with the coming of drought and depression in the 1930's, when for the first time Saskatchewan farmers became part of a national radical movement allied with urban labour. Nevertheless Lipset stressed that the creation of a mass socialist party in Saskatchewan was not simply the local extension of a new national movement, but an endemic movement having its roots in that province.[5]

Lipset's view of Saskatchewan politics has not gone unchallenged. The strongest criticism has come from Evelyn Eager, who observed in 1968 that

> Contrary to the legend of radicalism which has grown up about Saskatchewan political life, the electorate of the province has shown the traditional conservatism of a farming population. Electors have not tended to radical behaviour in the sense either of favouring extreme change or of casting their votes mainly for basic principle. They have shown less inclination to favour new political systems than to induce the existing system to work more directly to their advantage, and have paid less attention to principle than to practical results.

To be sure, radical movements with doctrinaire proposals, idealistic leadership and a hard core of fervent supporters have taken root and flourished in the province, but in each case "... the majority of voters repudiated the extremes which they offered in favour of more cautious and conservative political alternatives."[6] The basic conservatism of the Saskatchewan electorate explained the early dominance of the Liberal party, whose transformation into a virtual farmers' party enabled it to remain in power for nearly a quarter of a century after the province came into existence. Similarly, the election of a C.C.F. government came only after that party had dropped its most extreme policies and substantially modified its programme as outlined in the Regina Manifesto. Overall Eager concluded that while emotional and irrational issues have not been absent from Saskatchewan election campaigns, the results "show that abstract appeals have carried substantially less weight than matters of practical benefit."[7]

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[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-60.

[5] *Ibid.*, pp. 87, 103.

[6] E. Eager, "The Conservatism of the Saskatchewan Electorate,"

More recently David Smith has attempted to do for the Liberal party what Lipset did for the C.C.F. In the process he has offered a somewhat different perspective on Saskatchewan politics, arguing that

> The tap-root of Saskatchewan politics has been the Liberal party. For the first quarter-century of Saskatchewan's history almost all major political battles were fought out within the party; for the next decade and a half attacks were directed principally against the party; and for the last three decades the political field has been shared by the party with its only major

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Politics in Saskatchewan, ed. N. Ward and D. Spafford (Don Mills, Ontario: Longmans Canada Limited, 1968), p. 1. Ward and Spafford have brought together a collection of essays on various aspects of Saskatchewan politics, including the campaigns for women's suffrage and direct legislation, the rise of the Ku Klux Klan, the medicare dispute and the membership of the Legislative Assembly. While the book is not as inclusive as its title might indicate, *Politics in Saskatchewan* does provide some new insights into the province's political history, as the article by Eager demonstrates.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.

> competitor, the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, later the New Democratic Party.[8]

Moreover, Smith observed, "the Liberals never compromised themselves by coalescing with other parties, and as a result Saskatchewan has always enjoyed, in every sense of the term, partisan politics." Active partisanship has been the major recurring characteristic of Saskatchewan politics, and because of this the province still boasts the country's most competitive two-party system.[9]

Not surprisingly, perhaps, Smith devoted nearly half the book to the Liberals' twenty-four years of unbroken rule that began with the elevation of the North-West Territories to provincial status in 1905. Their success in Saskatchewan he attributed to an assiduous cultivation of the support of the organized farmers and the province's sizeable ethnic minorities, the work of the "well-oiled machine" and an eclecticism in matters of policy which saw Liberal governments alternately chide the provincial Conservatives for their penchant for government ownership and then embrace the same remedy as a solution to economic problems. Even the wave of agrarian unrest which swept the province after 1919 failed to materialize into a potent partisan threat, for Saskatchewan farmers could find no valid complaint against a provincial administration which lost no opportunity to demonstrate that it was in fact a "farmers' government" in all but name. Far more serious was the growing hostility toward continental European immigration evident in the province as early as 1922 and largely responsible for the Liberals' defeat at the end of the decade. Here the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan was important because it articulated latent Anglo-Saxon grievances as no other organization in Saskatchewan was able to do and "... unified opposition to the Liberals by successfully holding them responsible for the non-English problem."[10]

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[8] D. E. Smith, *Prairie Liberalism: The Liberal Party in Saskatchewan, 1905-71* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1975), p. 3.

[9] *Ibid.*, pp. 324, 334. For a similar view, see J. C. Courtney and D. E. Smith, "Saskatchewan: Parties in a Politically Competitive Province," *Canadian Provincial Politics: The Party Systems of the Ten Provinces*, ed. M. Robin (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall of Canada Limited, 1972), pp. 290-318.

The Klan's impact was short-lived, Smith argued, but with the collapse of the wheat economy after 1929 came a much more fundamental political upheaval in the province. Saskatchewan Liberals did not escape its repercussions. The emergence of an avowedly socialist party compelled them to redefine their political philosophy. No longer could they claim to be a party of moderate reform, for the C.C.F. was committed to go far beyond anything the Liberals had ever promised. In the past the Liberal party had not infrequently attacked established interests; henceforth it would feel obliged to defend "free enterprise" against the socialist hordes.

An impressive array of private papers and party records have been consulted in the preparation of *Prairie Liberalism*, and Smith has also used some of the graduate theses completed at

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[10] Smith, pp. 147-48.

Saskatchewan's two universities over the last decade or more. One of the greatest strengths of the book is its detailed description of the workings of the political organization created by J. A. Calder and kept in fine tune by his successors. In this respect *Prairie Liberalism* has easily superseded Escott Reid's venerable article as the standard account of the Saskatchewan Liberal "machine."[11] On the other hand Smith was unable to examine the papers of James Garfield Gardiner, Saskatchewan's fourth Premier and longtime federal Minister of Agriculture, and it appears that some important federal Liberal sources, among them the papers of Wilfrid Laurier and Clifford Sifton, were not consulted. While it may be possible to argue that "the continuity of Saskatchewan politics since 1905 has been found in the Liberal party,"[12] Smith's heavy reliance on the papers of Liberal premiers and cabinet ministers means that the past is often viewed solely through Liberal eyes, and provincial Liberal eyes at that. Of course no such extensive body of source materials exists for the Conservative or Progressive parties in Saskatchewan, but a careful scrutiny of those which have been preserved might be expected to cast new light on the Liberal party and its record of electoral success.

Notwithstanding these two valuable studies of the C.C.F. and Liberal parties, much of Saskatchewan's political history remains unexplored. There is, for example, no comprehensive history of the province to which the student of Saskatchewan politics can refer. The two earliest histories of Saskatchewan are now both hopelessly outdated,[13] and a third, written to commemorate the province's golden jubilee in 1955, cannot begin to match those of Manitoba, British Columbia or even Alberta.[14] C. C. Lingard has examined the agitation for provincial status in the North-West Territories which led to the creation of Canada's eighth and ninth provinces in 1905,[15] and D. H. Bocking has written a detailed account of the early political career of Saskatchewan's first Premier.[16] Paul Sharp has described the entrance of the Nonpartisan League of North Dakota into Saskatchewan politics during the First World War.[17] W. L. Morton's classic study of the great agrarian revolt of 1921 and its aftermath touched upon the fortunes of the farmers' political movement in Saskatchewan.[18] The entry of the organized farmers into provincial politics and the response of the incumbent Liberal administration at Regina has also been considered in greater detail in three graduate theses.[19] The defeat of the Liberals in 1929 has also been examined from several perspectives, with particular emphasis being placed on the appearance of the Ku Klux Klan and the racial and religious antagonisms it engendered in the province.[20] Apart from a study of the policies of the Co-operative Government during the Depression years,[21] virtually nothing has been written on the Conservative party in Saskatchewan, and the 1934 and 1944 elections have been the only other provincial contests to receive detailed scrutiny.[22]

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[11] E. Reid, "The Saskatchewan Liberal Machine Before 1929," *Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science*, Vol. II, No. 1 (February, 1936), pp. 27-40.

[12] Smith, p. 324.

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[13] N. F. Black, *History of Saskatchewan and the North-West Territories* (Regina: Saskatchewan Historical Company, 1913); J. Hawkes, *The Story of Saskatchewan and Its People* (Chicago: Clark Publishing Company, 1924).

[14] J. F. C. Wright, *Saskatchewan: The History of a Province* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1955). For Manitoba see W. L. Morton, *Manitoba: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957); for British Columbia, M. Ormsby, *British Columbia: A History* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1958) and M. Robin, *The Rush for Spoils: The Company Province, 1871-1933* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972) and its companion, *Pillars of Profit: The Company Province, 1934-1972* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973). An adequate treatment of Alberta's history may be found in J. G. MacGregor, *A History of Alberta* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1972), and the early history of that province is treated in greater detail in L. G. Thomas, *The Liberal Party in Alberta: A History of Politics in the Province of Alberta, 1905-1921* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959).

While Saskatchewan may not yet boast an adequate provincial history, a comprehensive study of its governmental and political institutions may be found in E. L. Eager, "The Government of Saskatchewan" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1957). J. H. Richards and K. I. Fung have prepared an indispensable aid for anyone unfamiliar with the geography of the province with their *Atlas of Saskatchewan* (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 1969). To assist the reader who might not be familiar with Saskatchewan's political geography, a series of maps showing the provincial constituency boundaries for the period 1905-1929 may be found in the Appendix.

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[15] C. C. Lingard, *Territorial Government in Canada: The Autonomy Question in the Old North-West Territories* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1946).

[16] D. H. Bocking, "Premier Walter Scott: A Study of His Rise to Political Power" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1959).

[17] P. F. Sharp, *The Agrarian Revolt in Western Canada: A Survey Showing American Parallels* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1948), pp. 77-104.

[18] W. L. Morton, *The Progressive Party in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), pp. 231-35.

[19] F. W. Anderson, "Some Political Aspects of the Grain Growers' Movement (1915-1935) With Particular Reference to Saskatchewan" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1949); J. W. G. Brennan, "The Public Career of Charles Avery Dunning in Saskatchewan" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina, 1968); L. D. Courville, "The Saskatchewan Progressives" (unpublsihed M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina, 1971).

It should be apparent from this brief survey that there remains a need for a comprehensive political history of the province drawing upon the results of work already completed and the considerable body of archival material which has not yet been touched. To meet that need, in part at least, this dissertation will examine the course of party politics in Saskatchewan during the formative years of the province's history, from 1905 to 1929. The choice of the first quarter century can be justified on several grounds. In the first place, these years marked the beginning of partisan competition along traditional party lines. Federal party divisions had been scrupulously avoided in local elections in the North-West Territories, and the Territorial Premier, F. W. G. Haultain, sought to perpetuate this nonpartisan tradition in the new province. Although a majority of the voters felt otherwise in 1905, a lingering suspicion of "partyism" endured in the province and helped to bring about the downfall of the Liberal regime in 1929.

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[20] W. Calderwood, "The Rise and Fall of the Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina, 1968); R. J. A. Huel, "L'Association Catholique Franco-Canadienne de la Saskatchewan: A Response to Cultural Assimilation, 1912-1934" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina, 1969); P. Kyba, "The Saskatchewan General Election of 1929" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1964); G. Unger, "James G. Gardiner: The Premier as a Pragmatic Politician, 1926-1929" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1967).

[21] P. A. Russell, "The Co-operative Government in Saskatchewan, 1929-1934: Response to the Depression" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1970).

[22] G. J. Hoffman, "The Saskatchewan Provincial Election of 1934: Its Political, Economic and Social Background" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina, 1973); R. M. Sherdahl, "The Saskatchewan General Election of 1944" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1966). A brief account of the 1905 contest may be found in D. H. Bocking, "Saskatchewan's First Provincial Election," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XVII, No. 2 (Spring, 1964), pp. 41-54.

Then, too, wheat became king in Saskatchewan after 1905, and cereal agriculture and the grain grower came to dominate the politics of the province more completely than in either of its prairie neighbours. The strains inherent in an unstable wheat economy gave rise to two new parties during these years. That neither the Nonpartisan League nor the Progressives were able to secure control of the government at Regina was due as much to the lack of harmony within the farmers' movement in Saskatchewan as to the adroit manoevring of successive Liberal premiers. Governments in Saskatchewan early recognized the need to diversify the province's economic base, and their efforts deserve closer scrutiny than they have hitherto received.

In a province as dependent as Saskatchewan on the production and sale of a single staple crop there was seldom to be any serious disagreement on economic issues in the quarter century after provincial status was achieved. Such harmony proved more difficult to achieve on other questions, for the province was being populated by immigrants from many lands, people whose language, religion and culture often differed significantly from those of the dominant Anglo-Protestant group. Many in this group felt that if the influx continued unabated and if the newcomers segregated themselves from the larger society and refused to adopt its norms and values, Canada would not remain "British" and the Anglo-Protestant character would disintegrate. While these fears and anxieties were manifested throughout the nation after the turn of the century,[23] in Saskatchewan they were to assume the status of a unique obsession. For those in the province who considered cultural homogeneity and national unity as synonymous, the public school came to be regarded as the ideal instrument with which to mould Saskatchewan's ethnic minorities into responsible British subjects and Canadian citizens. Anti-Catholicism, Francophobia and nativism[24] were latent sentiments within the Anglo-Protestant community in Saskatchewan, and because they were all to have important political repercussions after 1905 they too merit closer examination.

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[23] C. Berger, *The Sense of Power: Studies in the Ideas of Canadian Imperialism, 1867-1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1970), pp. 128-52; C. J. Jaenen, "Grinding in the Mill or Breaking the Crust: The Western Canadian Schools Version of the Melting Pot," Paper given at the University of Regina, January 1976.

[24] For a definition of the term "nativism" most historians have turned to the writings of an American, John Higham. In his classic study of the impact of this amalgam of ethnic prejudice and nationalism on American history, Higham defined nativism as "intense opposition to an internal minority on the grounds of its foreign ... connections." (J. Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860-1925* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1955), p. 4.

Any history of Saskatchewan and its politics, then, must take into account these basic factors -- its one-crop economy and rural and multicultural society -- which together set the province apart from its prairie neighbours. The unique character of Saskatchewan did not emerge full-blown after 1905; it was part of the inheritance which the new province received from the North-West Territories. Thus a brief review of the settlement and growth of the Territories, and of the considerable Territorial political tradition to which Saskatchewan fell heir, is a necessary prelude to this study.

The acquisition of the North-West had been an important objective of the Fathers of Confederation, and the transfer of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1868 was one of the first accomplishments of the new Dominion. From the outset the federal government intended that its authority and its policies should be paramount in the new territory, which was to be administered, temporarily at least, through a Lieutenant-Governor who would receive his appointment and instructions from Ottawa. The diminutive province of Manitoba was created in 1870, but the remainder of the North-West continued to be governed by Ottawa through the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba. The North-West Territories Act of 1875 replaced this primitive form of administration with a separate lieutenant-governor and council for the Territories, resident at

Battleford to 1883 and thereafter at Regina. Members were to be elected to the Territorial Council as the population increased, so that when the number of elected councillors reached a total of twenty-one the Council would be replaced by a Legislative Assembly.[25] The first elected member of the Territorial Council was chosen in 1881. By 1888 the requirements of the Act had been satisfied and the Council gave way to a Legislative Assembly.[26]

This new body, like its predecessor, possessed some but not all of the legislative powers of a province. It could raise revenue by direct taxation, issue licences of various sorts, establish municipal institutions and courts and incorporate local companies. The bill establishing the Legislative Assembly made no provision for a cabinet, though there was to be an "advisory council in matters of finance" presided over by the Lieutenant-Governor. It was to have control of the spending of local revenues, but the annual parliamentary appropriation, which constituted the largest single source of revenue, remained under the exclusive control of the Lieutenant-Governor.[27] In another important respect the status of the North-West Territories was an inferior one. Its public lands and natural resources were administered by Ottawa after 1870 because the federal government was determined that it should play the leading role in peopling and developing the west.[28]

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[25] Canada, *Statutes*, 32-33 Vic., Chapter 3; 38 Vic., Chapter 49. These developments are discussed in greater detail in L. H. Thomas, *The Struggle for Responsible Government in the North-West Territories, 1870-1897* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1956), pp. 3-80.

[26] L. H. Thomas, pp. 88-89, 146-53.

[27] *Ibid.*, pp. 153-56.

To this end a free homestead policy was adopted in 1872. Under the terms of the Dominion Lands Act any person who was the head of a family or twenty-one years of age could take up 160 acres of unoccupied Dominion land in an even-numbered section upon payment of a $10.00 registration fee. After three years' occupation and cultivation the settler could obtain clear title to his homestead. Before the patent could be issued, the homesteader was required to be a British subject, and no transfer of the homestead was permitted until all the conditions had been met.[29] Thus there was from the very beginning a powerful economic stimulus for the new settler who was not a British subject to become naturalized, and this was later to be reinforced by the zeal of party organizers in ensuring that all who were eligible to vote acquired citizenship before election day.

The federal government also gave subsidies of cash and land to a syndicate of Montreal bankers and railway promoters to assist the construction of a line linking eastern Canada with the still sparsely settled prairies and British Columbia. As originally surveyed, the Canadian Pacific Railway was to have run northwest from Winnipeg along the North Saskatchewan River to the Yellowhead Pass, but more optimistic assessments of the agricultural potential of the southern prairies and a desire to forestall competition by rival American lines resulted in a decision to build the C.P.R. straight west from Winnipeg through the Kicking Horse Pass.[30] The change in route dramatically altered the pattern of settlement in the North-West Territories. Completed in 1885, the C.P.R. ran far to the south of Prince Albert, Battleford and Edmonton, all of which had confidently expected to be on or near the railway. Clusters of shacks and tents quickly sprang up along the C.P.R. to form the nucleus of Indian Head, Regina, Moose Jaw, Swift Current and other communities, and homesteaders took up land along the line.[31]

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[28] A. S. Morton and C. Martin, *History of Prairie Settlement and "Dominion Lands" Policy*, Vol. II of *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, ed. W. A. Mackintosh and W. L. G. Joerg (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1938), pp. 220-28.

[29] *Ibid.*, pp. 394-97; N. Macdonald, *Canada: Immigration and Colonization, 1841-1903* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1968), pp. 172-74.

Most were eastern Canadians or immigrants from Great Britain, at least during the 1880's and early 1890's. They were readily absorbed into Territorial society -- indeed they set its tone -- and moved easily into positions of prominence in local politics and farm and labour organizations. It was one of their number, Frederick William Gordon Haultain, who has come to be most closely associated, in popular and scholarly opinion, with the lively struggle for full local self-government which dominated Territorial politics during these years. The son of a British army officer who had also served as a member of the Legislative Assembly of the old Province of Canada, F. W. G. Haultain graduated from the University of Toronto with First Class Honours in Classics. He came west to begin the practice of law at Fort MacLeod in 1884. When the Macleod electoral district was created in 1887, Haultain, then only thirty years of age, was chosen as its representative. In the first elections to the Territorial Assembly, which took place the following year, the young member from Fort Macleod was again victorious. He was one of the four members subsequently selected by the Lieutenant-Governor to serve on the Advisory Council. Haultain quickly assumed the leadership of the struggle to extend the jurisdiction of that body to include the whole field of Territorial administration, and to secure popular control of the annual federal grant.[32]

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[30] H. A. Innis, *A History of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (2nd ed.; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), pp. 97-103.

[31] A.S. Morton and C. Martin, pp. 72-73; E. G. Drake, *Regina: The Queen City* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1955), pp. 4-32; D. C. McGowan, *Grassland Settlers: The Swift Current Region during the Era of the Ranching Frontier* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1975), pp. 11-27.

In 1891 the North-West Territories Act was amended to increase the powers of the Assembly, and to provide for the first time that local revenues and the federal appropriation could be expended by the Lieutenant-Governor on the advice of the Assembly or a committee of that body.[33] The Executive Committee of the

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[32] L. H. Thomas, "The Political and Private Life of F. W. G. Haultain," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2 (Spring, 1970), pp. 50-51; *Struggle for Responsible Government*, pp. 161-99.

[33] Canada, *Statutes*, 54-55 Vic., Chapter 22.

North-West Territories, as it was called, was duly established later in the year. This Executive Committee closely resembled a cabinet, for its members were to receive salaries and take an oath of office, and the Lieutenant-Governor was to be excluded from membership, but Ottawa proved unwilling to extend the principle of responsible government in full.[34] With one brief interruption, Haultain headed the Executive Committee from 1891 to 1897. He proved to be an efficient and honest administrator, and his considerable intellectual and oratorical powers made him a master of debate in the Assembly. Haultain was a vigorous and outspoken champion of the interests of the North-West, constantly pressing a reluctant federal government to concede full responsible cabinet government to the Territories. This was finally granted in 1897, and Haultain was called upon to form the first ministry under the new system.[35]

The winning of responsible government came just as a new era was about to dawn in the North-West Territories and in Canada. A severe depression that had lasted throughout the early 1890's gave way to unprecedented prosperity. The price of wheat rose, cheaper transportation rates on land and sea made the export of this commodity more profitable and sophisticated techniques for farming in a semi-arid region, developed at the Dominion

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[34] L. H. Thomas, *Struggle for Responsible Government*, pp. 199-204.

[35] *Ibid.*, pp. 205-61.

Experimental Farm at Indian Head, brought good harvests to the prairies. With the free land of the American west nearly exhausted the "Last, Best West" of the immigration literature came into its own,[36] as thousands of settlers arrived each year to take up homesteads or work in its bustling towns and cities. The growth of population in the Territories had hitherto been disappointingly slow, increasing from 25,515 in 1881 to only 66,799 in 1891. In the next decade alone it jumped to 158,940.[37]

A large proportion of the newcomers continued to be drawn from eastern Canada and Great Britain. Some took up land along the C.P.R. main line, while others established themselves in the Shellbrook-Prince Albert district or at Lloydminster, the site of the Barr Colony.[38] They helped to reinforce the "British" character of Territorial society at a time when the population was beginning to take on a more cosmopolitan character. As early as the 1880's small numbers of European settlers had begun to arrive in the Territories. Some had come under the auspices of immigration agents like the mysterious and flamboyant Count Paul O. d'Esterhazy, who settled a group of Hungarian miners from Pennsylvania in a colony north of Whitewood in 1885.[39] More had been brought in by the railways. The C.P.R. was a very active colonizer, and so too was the Manitoba and North Western Railway, which completed its line from Winnipeg to Yorkton in 1890. Scandinavians settled near Whitewood and Fleming, and German, Polish and Rumanian colonies were established in the Yorkton district and north of Grenfell, Wolseley and Regina. Germans, chiefly Mennonites, settled around Rosthern and French immigrants settled at Duck Lake, St. Louis and Domremy.[40]

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[36] R. C. Brown and R. Cook, *Canada, 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1974), pp. 49-57; L. H. Thomas, "A History of Agriculture on the Prairies to 1914," *Prairie Forum*, Vol. 1, No. 1 (April, 1976), pp. 40-45.

[37] Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Canada, 1890-91*, Vol. I (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1893), p. 369; *Fourth Census of Canada, 1901*, Vol. I (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1902), p. 417.

[38] E. H. Oliver, "The Settlement of Saskatchewan to 1914," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Vol. XX, series III, Section Two (May, 1926), pp. 70-73.

After 1896 the trickle became a flood, as the vacant lands of the Territories were taken up by Clifford Sifton's "stalwart peasant in a sheepskin coat" from central and eastern Europe. In 1899, for instance, some 7,400 Doukhobors, members of a Russian pacifist religious sect, were brought to the prairies and settled in two colonies near Yorkton and another near Rosthern.[41] Even larger numbers of Ruthenians, Galicians and Bukowinians, later to become known collectively as Ukrainians, migrated from Russia and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Attracted to the west by the promise of free land, most arrived with little or no money and no knowledge of English, and began life anew on the prairies as railway "navvies" or as farm labourers. When they moved on to homesteads they chose the wooded lands of the Park Belt rather than the open prairies. Their compact settlements soon extended across the Territories in a wide arc from Yorkton to Edmonton.[42]

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[39] G. V. Dojcsak, "The Mysterious Count Esterhazy," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXVI, No. 2 (Spring, 1973), pp. 63-72; M. L. Kovacs, *Esterhazy and Early Hungarian Immigration to Canada* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1974).

[40] A. S. Morton and C. Martin, pp. 80-82, 86-89, 96-99.

[41] C. A. Dawson, *Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada*, Vol. VII of *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, ed. W. A. Mackintosh and W. L. G. Joerg (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1936), pp. 4-10.

Farmers from the United States also began to swell the flood of incoming homesteaders during these years. Not all, of course, were native-born Americans; many were returning Canadians or Germans or Scandinavians who had settled briefly in the United States. They often brought with them large quantities of farm machinery and stock and considerable sums of money, more usually than any other immigrant group.[43] With their practical knowledge of "dry farming" techniques they frequently took up land in the Territories which others had judged useless. The country between Regina and Saskatoon, which had long been considered unsuitable for cultivation, was settled largely by Americans, many of whom were attracted to the area by the efforts of the Saskatchewan

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[42] R. England, *The Colonization of Western Canada: A Study of Contemporary Land Settlement, 1896-1934* (London: P. S. King and Son, 1936), pp. 202-209; V. J. Kaye, *Early Ukrainian Settlements in Canada, 1895-1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964).

[43] P. F. Sharp, "The American Farmer and the 'Last Best West'," *Agricultural History*, Vol. XXI, No. 2 (April, 1947), pp. 65-75; K. D. Bicha, *The American Farmer and the Canadian West, 1896-1914* (Lawrence, Kansas: Coronado Press, 1968).

Valley Land Company, a syndicate of Canadian and American businessmen which acquired some 840,000 acres of land south of Saskatoon in 1902.[44] Farther south farmers from the United States were taking up land along the "Soo Line," built by the C.P.R. in 1893 to connect Portal, on the American border, with Estevan, Weyburn and Moose Jaw.[45]

It was the prospect of profitable grain growing which attracted settlers to the virgin lands of Manitoba and the North-West Territories. Once established on their farms many found that grain growing was not as remunerative as they had anticipated. The production of wheat increased much more rapidly than the physical facilities for storing and shipping it. From a total of 30,856,223 bushels harvested in 1898, the western wheat crop grew to 34,837,853 bushels in 1899 and 63,178,428 bushels in 1901.[46] The C.P.R. experienced great difficulty in providing sufficient rolling stock to move these larger quantities of grain, and the flat warehouses which had been erected at various local shipping points proved to be completely inadequate as a medium of initial storage. To relieve the acute seasonal strain upon its transportation facilities the C.P.R. began to offer special concessions to encourage the construction of larger storage facilities along its lines. A free site and pledge that the railway would refuse to permit cars to be loaded through flat warehouses or direct from farmers' wagons at any shipping point where a standard elevator of at least 25,000 bushels capacity was established soon had the desired effect. By the end of the century there were 447 standard elevators in Manitoba and the North-West Territories, the majority of which were owned by a few line companies or milling concerns. Western farmers were quick to protest against the virtual monopoly control of grain handling facilities enjoyed by these few companies, and against the unscrupulous practices in which local elevator operators were widely believed to engage.[47]

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[44] Macdonald, pp. 253-54.

[45] A. S. Morton and C. Martin, p. 120.

[46] Canada, Department of Agriculture, *The Statistical Year-Book of Canada for 1901* (Ottawa: Government Printing Bureau, 1902), pp. 90-92.

The farmers' grievances were aired in the Territorial Assembly, in the Manitoba Legislature and in Parliament, and in 1899 the Laurier government appointed a royal commission to investigate. Its findings and recommendations were incorporated in the Manitoba Grain Act of 1900, which provided for the general supervision of all country and terminal elevators by the federal government and gave the farmer greater freedom in shipping and marketing his grain.[48] This brought some relief, but the record harvest of 1901 taxed the capacity of the western railway network to the breaking point. There was a severe car shortage, elevators were soon filled to overflowing, and farmers could not deliver their grain. The problem was more acute in the North-West Territories than in Manitoba, since Territorial farmers were more dependent on a single railway line to move their grain, and the distance to the Lakehead was greater.[49]

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[47] H. S. Patton, *Grain Growers' Coopèration in Western Canada* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1928), pp. 12-18. These unscrupulous practices included the mixing of grain to improve its grade, improper weighing and excessive dockage for uncleaned wheat.

[48] *Ibid.*, pp. 18-25. The railways were required to supply cars without discrimination and build a loading platform at any shipping point when requested to do so by ten or more local farmers.

As the months passed, and the "grain blockade" grew worse, two farmers from the Indian Head district, W. R. Motherwell and Peter Dayman, called a meeting to air their grievances and discuss ways of alleviating the situation. On 18 December 1901 some seventy-five local farmers gathered at Indian Head and agreed to establish a Territorial Grain Growers' Association.[50] They began at once to organize local branches of the new farmers' association throughout the Territories. Early in 1902 the first annual convention of the T.G.G.A. was held at Indian Head, and W. R. Motherwell, the Ontario-born farmer who had done so much to bring it into existence, was elected its first president.[51] From the beginning the T.G.G.A. proved to be a vigorous champion of the interests of western farmers, as its victory over the C.P.R. in the much publicized "Sintaluta case" of 1902 amply demonstrated.[52]

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[49] *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

[50] The circumstances surrounding the formation of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association are described in greater detail in H. Moorhouse, *Deep Furrows* (Toronto: George J. McLeod Limited, 1918), pp. 19-53; L. A. Wood, *A History of Farmers' Movements in Canada* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1924), pp. 171-76; Patton, pp. 32-35.

[51] A. R. Turner, "W. R. Motherwell: The Emergence of a Farm Leader," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XI, No. 3 (Autumn, 1958), pp. 94-102.

Territorial farmers looked to Ottawa to remedy their grievances concerning the transportation and marketing of their grain and by 1903, with the passage of the Manitoba Grain Act and its subsequent amendments, they had achieved some measure of success. During these years the local government at Regina also showed a sympathetic concern for the problems of the grain grower. A Territorial Department of Agriculture, established in 1897, collected and disseminated information concerning improved farming practices, encouraged the formation of agricultural societies, supervised a programme for the destruction of noxious weeds and registered the farmers' harvest labour requirements and assisted in allocating the large numbers of men who came west each season to work on the threshing gangs.[53] To protect farmers against losses from hail storms the Haultain government introduced a voluntary hail insurance scheme in 1901. The scheme was operated as a government monopoly, and no other company or association was permitted to sell hail insurance in the Territories.[54]

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[52] Patton, pp. 35-40. The T.G.G.A. laid a charge against the C.P.R. station agent at Sintaluta for violating the car distribution clause in the Manitoba Grain Act. The agent was found guilty, and his conviction was upheld when the C.P.R. appealed the case to a higher court.

[53] A. R. Turner, "W. R. Motherwell and Agricultural Development in Saskatchewan, 1905-1918" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1958), pp. 19-20.

Regina was also expected to provide the schools, local public works and other services required by an expanding Territorial population. For a government which possessed most of the powers and responsibilities of a province but lacked the commensurate financial resources this became increasingly difficult. The Territorial government was unable to borrow money. It could not secure revenue from the public lands which were controlled by Ottawa, nor could it tax the C.P.R. whose federal charter had exempted the railway from any form of taxation on its property and capital stock. To supplement meagre local revenues, the Regina administration had long received an annual grant from Ottawa but, until 1904 at least, this grant was insufficient to meet Territorial requirements. Better railway facilities were a matter of pressing concern to struggling pioneer communities which were often located many miles from the nearest line, yet the Haultain government lacked the power to charter railways or grant them financial assistance.[55] It was the very success of the federal government's immigration campaign which set in motion the final stage in the political evolution of the North-West Territories -- the agitation for provincial status.

Provincial status seemed to offer a solution to the financial difficulties confronting the Territorial government. In 1900 the Territorial Assembly unanimously endorsed a resolution urging the federal government to make a complete inquiry into the terms upon which provincial status might be granted. Premier Haultain then began negotiations for a conference with Prime Minister Laurier and his cabinet which took place in Ottawa on 25 October 1901. There Haultain presented a draft bill creating a single province which would comprise all the territory between Manitoba and British Columbia and between the forty-ninth and fifty-seventh parallels of north latitude. This province was to have full provincial rights, including control of all public lands and natural resources. Laurier and his colleagues rejected these proposals in March 1902, claiming that the demand for provincial autonomy was premature and that there was no general agreement in the Territories or elsewhere on the number of provinces to be created.[56] Haultain promptly called an election on the issue, and was returned with a large majority.[57] Territorial residents, it seemed, agreed with Haultain that full provincial autonomy should be granted at once.

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[54] E. G. Hingley, *Municipal Hail Insurance: A History of the Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance Association* (Regina: Saskatchewan Municipal Hail Insurance Association, 1967), pp. 2-3.

[55] Lingard, pp. 8-20, 114.

It was at this point that provincial autonomy became an issue in federal politics. During a speaking tour of the west in 1902 and later in the House of Commons the leader of the Conservative party, R. L. Borden, declared his support for immediate provincial status for the North-West Territories and full provincial powers, including control of all lands and natural resources.[58] This had the effect of further chilling the enthusiasm of federal Liberals for immediate provincial autonomy.[59] In the Territories, meanwhile, a series of developments threatened to undermine the support which Haultain had hitherto enjoyed among Liberals and Conservatives alike.

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[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 26-50.

[57] *Ibid.*, pp. 53-54.

F. W. G. Haultain had become closely identified with the nonpartisan political tradition which had taken root in the Territories during his fifteen years of public life. A suspicion of "partyism" was a well-developed characteristic of Territorial residents, who believed that a too rigid adherence to either of the national parties would not serve their own best interests.[60] To be sure, "partyism" did triumph in federal politics in the Territories. The influence of the press, the patronage of the federal government, traditional party loyalties and the power of the party organizations all tended to prepare the ground "for a contest along traditional party lines when the first election of members for the House of Commons took place in 1887."[61] On the other hand, federal party distinctions were scrupulously avoided in local politics. It was felt, and not without good reason, that such divisions were irrelevant to a consideration of the problems of schools, roads and public works which occupied the attention of the Assembly in Regina. Moreover, the financial and constitutional position of the Territories was too precarious to risk the opposition of a rival party in power at Ottawa, or to withstand the pressures and claims of federal party considerations if the two governments were controlled by the same party. After 1900, of course, these pragmatic considerations were reinforced by the desire to maintain a united front in the negotiations with Ottawa to secure provincial autonomy.[62]

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[58] H. Borden, ed., *Robert Laird Borden: His Memoirs*, Vol. I: *1854-1915* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1938), pp. 91-92, 102.

[59] Lingard, pp. 76-107.

[60] C. B. Koester, "Nicholas Flood Davin: A Biography" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971), pp. 146-52.

[61] L. H. Thomas, *Struggle for Responsible Government*, p. 106.

In federal politics Haultain was very much in the Conservative fold, certainly by 1902,[63] but this had not prevented such prominent Territorial Liberals as James H. Ross, Arthur Sifton and G. H. V. Bulyea from serving under him. The cabinet was not regarded as a coalition, for such an arrangement would have been a recognition of the existence of federal party distinctions.[64] This method of administering Territorial affairs drew criticism from a group of Conservatives who wished to see the local Assembly divide on federal party lines. At a convention in Moose Jaw on 25 March 1903 delegates passed a resolution in favour of contesting the next Territorial election as Conservatives. Although Haultain opposed this resolution, he remained in the convention after it was approved, and accepted the position of honorary president in the newly formed Territorial Conservative Association.[65] He subsequently declared in a newspaper interview that he remained convinced that there should not be a party division in the Assembly and that he was not bound by the convention resolution. Haultain's public statement, and further private assurances satisfied his Liberal colleague, Bulyea, who had offered his resignation immediately after the convention.[66] In spite of these assurances, Territorial Liberals became increasingly suspicious of Haultain's real beliefs and intentions.

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[62] Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," pp. 42-43.

[63] R. C. Brown, *Robert Laird Borden: A Biography*, Vol. I: *1854-1914* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1975), pp. 54-55.

[64] Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," pp. 41-42. J. H. Ross, a Moose Jaw rancher, held the portfolios of Territorial Secretary and Commissioner of Agriculture, 1897-1899; Commissioner of Public Works, 1897-1901; and Territorial Treasurer, 1899-1901. A. L. Sifton, brother of the federal Minister of the Interior, succeeded Ross as Commissioner of Public Works and Territorial Treasurer, 1901-1903. G. H. V. Bulyea served as Commissioner of

The negotiations which took place between the Territorial Premier and the federal government over the size of the federal grant for 1903 made Haultain's professed nonpartisanism even more suspect in Liberal eyes. The Minister of Finance offered the

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Agriculture, 1899-1903; Territorial Secretary, 1899-1905; and Commissioner of Public Works, 1903-1905. (*Directory of the Council and Legislative Assembly of the North-West Territories, 1876-1905* [hereafter cited as *N.W.T. Directory*], Regina: Saskatchewan Archives Board, 1970, pp. 6-7.)

[65] Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," pp. 68-69.

[66] D. H. Bocking, "Political Ambitions and Territorial Affairs," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2 (Spring, 1965), pp. 65-66.

Territories the same basic grant as provided the previous year, a supplementary amount to cover the 1902 deficit and a loan for capital construction, or "capital advance" as it was called. Haultain had given the impression to Territorial Liberals that he would accept the capital advance but when the offer was made he rejected it and demanded instead a larger basic grant. A larger grant was eventually provided but he continued to refuse the capital advance. This prompted Bulyea again to offer his resignation, claiming that Haultain's action was dictated by party interests. Negotiations between representatives of the two men eventually produced a compromise: Bulyea withdrew his resignation and in return the capital advance was not rejected but was simply not used.[67] Bulyea was persuaded to remain in Haultain's cabinet as much by Liberal party interests as by the compromise on the question of the capital advance. The Liberals feared that with Bulyea gone the nonpartisan Territorial government would disintegrate and they would be blamed for bringing about a division on party lines. An early federal election was anticipated, and Territorial Liberals were concerned that Bulyea's resignation would leave the distribution of local patronage completely in the hands of their Conservative opponents. To avoid these difficulties they persuaded Bulyea to withdraw his resignation.[68]

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[67] *Ibid.*, pp. 66-69.

[68] *Ibid.*, p. 70.

Before the end of the year Liberals in the Territories and at Ottawa were given further reason to regard Haultain as a political opponent. Through the assistance of J. H. Ross and Walter Scott, a Regina newspaperman and M.P. for West Assiniboia, an appointment to the bench was secured for Haultain at the Premier's request. The Liberals were naturally anxious to accommodate Haultain for it would eliminate him from the political field and give them undisputed control in the Territories. By the time the appointment was offered, however, Haultain had begun to have serious reservations about accepting it, and in the end could not be persuaded to do so. J. H. Ross was "grievously incensed" by Haultain's action for he believed it had made him look foolish. Ross, who possessed a great deal of influence within Territorial Liberal circles, was determined as a result of this incident never to assist Haultain again.[69]

The federal election which Territorial Liberals had expected would come in 1903 did not take place until the following year. On the eve of that contest Laurier promised to deal with the autonomy question if his government was sustained at the polls.[70] Haultain campaigned vigorously for the Conservative party in the 1904 election and attempted to use his personal prestige to make autonomy the main issue in the Territories. The Conservatives took three seats there, and the Liberals seven, but the question of provincial status "... exercised comparatively little infuence on the public mind."[71] In the Dominion as a whole the Liberals won a decisive victory. The stage was now set for the granting of provincial autonomy to the North-West Territories.

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[69] *Ibid.*, pp. 70-71.

[70] O. D. Skelton, *Life and Letters of Sir Wilfrid Laurier*, Vol. II: *1896-1919* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 224.

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[71] Lingard, p. 111.

CHAPTER I

THE SASKATCHEWAN ACT AND THE 1905 ELECTION

The province of Saskatchewan was born in controversy. The terms of the Saskatchewan Act, particularly the clauses guaranteeing the right of the minority to separate schools and reserving control of the public domain to the federal government, were hotly debated in Parliament, in the press and in the first provincial election which took place on 13 December 1905. That contest was fought on party lines, a significant departure from the tradition of avoiding federal party divisions in local elections which had developed in the North-West Territories. The victory of Premier Walter Scott and the Liberals marked the beginning of an era of Liberal dominance in provincial politics which was to last for nearly a quarter of a century.

Early in January 1905 Premier Haultain and his senior cabinet colleague, G. H. V. Bulyea, arrived in Ottawa to begin the final negotiations that would end the subordinate status of the North-West Territories. The discussions with Laurier and members of his cabinet continued over a period of several weeks. During this time Laurier also consulted with Territorial Liberals in the House of Commons and the Senate, as did Haultain and Bulyea. Following these meetings a committee of the cabinet prepared the draft legislation, which Laurier himself presented to the House of

Commons on 21 February 1905.[1]

In three important respects the terms of this legislation differed greatly from Haultain's draft bill of 1901. The draft bill would have created a single province; Laurier proposed to establish two provinces, Alberta and Saskatchewan. Edmonton and Regina were named as their respective provisional capitals, subject to alteration later by the local legislatures. Haultain had wanted provincial control of the public domain; the federal government intended to retain control of the public lands and natural resources of the new provinces and provide financial compensation in the form of an annual subsidy. The Territorial Premier had wanted complete provincial control of education; the Liberals inserted a clause in the autonomy bills which would, in Laurier's words, ensure "... that the minority shall have the power to establish their own schools and that they shall have the right to share in the public moneys."[2]

The decision to create two provinces, rather than the single province desired by Haultain, may have been influenced by a number of considerations. The size of the additional province or provinces that might eventually be established in the North-West was not given serious attention in 1870, but when the boundaries of Manitoba were extended in 1881 a detailed scheme for the future subdivision of the Territories was drawn up. According to this plan, which was prepared by J. S. Dennis, the Deputy Minister of the Interior, there were to be four provinces, ranging in size from 95,000 to 122,000 square miles, thereby "securing to each Province as nearly as possible an equal share of the great natural resources of the Territories."[3] On the basis of this plan, the Macdonald government established the four provisional districts of Alberta, Assiniboia, Athabasca and Saskatchewan the following year. Macdonald intimated at the time that these districts might later become provinces in their own right, though he refused to make any definite commitment. The provisional districts in fact never became independent jurisdictions, but they did provide the focus for a sense of "district consciousness" among Territorial residents.[4]

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[1] Lingard, pp. 129-32; Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, 1905, Vol. I, col. 1422ff.

[2] Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, 1905, Vol. I, col. 1457.

In 1896 Dr. R. G. Brett, the member for Banff, proposed in the Territorial Assembly that the district of Alberta be made a separate province. His resolution received little support at the time, but the idea of establishing two provinces, on an east-west or a north-south basis, became more popular as the years passed and the ambition of rival communities to be elevated to the status of provincial capitals grew more intense. Premier Haultain, of course, was publicly committed to the concept of a single province comprising the whole of the settled portion of the Territories. For a time the idea of creating a single smaller province and adding the eastern portion of the existing districts of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan to Manitoba also attracted wide interest, particularly among Manitobans. It formed the subject of a public debate at Indian Head in December 1901 between Premier Haultain and his eastern counterpart, R. P. Roblin, but the response of the local residents made it clear that they did not favour annexation to Manitoba.[5]

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[3] Quoted in L. H. Thomas, *Struggle for Responsible Government*, p. 97.

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98.

Whatever the merits of creating a single large province, or a smaller province with a portion of the Territories added to Manitoba, the members of Laurier's cabinet were apparently agreed that the Territories should be divided into two provinces.[6] Laurier explained to the House of Commons that his government believed the immense area of the Territories was too large for a single province. He made a point of rejecting Manitoba's claim for a westward extension of its boundary on the grounds that it would be contrary to the wishes of the residents of the Territories. Instead two provinces of approximately equal size would be established in the Territories, with the fourth meridian serving as the dividing line.[7]

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[5] Lingard, pp. 21-22, 60-75.

[6] J. W. Dafoe, *Clifford Sifton in Relation to His Times* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1931), p. 280.

[7] Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, 1905, Vol. I, cols. 1426-31. Laurier offered no special reasons for the choice of the

The creation of two new western provinces in addition to Manitoba may simply have been a recognition of the strength of "two-province" sentiment among Territorial residents. This sentiment was particularly strong in Calgary, but even in the eastern portion of the Territories one of Haultain's staunchest supporters was soon to advise the Premier to abandon his "'one province' fad" on account of the near-unanimous public approval of the decision to create two provinces.[8]

Considerations of Territorial public opinion aside, it seems clear that Haultain's proposal for a single province was unattractive for other reasons as well. Whatever the motivation or defense of Haultain's actions since 1903, his failure to make a convincing repudiation of the Conservative policy with respect to party lines in the Territories and his subsequent refusal of the capital advance and the judgeship had created in Territorial Liberals feelings of suspicion and eventually of distrust. Whether or not the Premier actually was influenced by party considerations, the fact that

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fourth meridian as the dividing line, save to declare that it would give approximately the same area and population to each of the new provinces. The division of the Territories along the fourth meridian provoked little criticism, though the cattlemen in Alberta and in the western part of Assiniboia objected to it, arguing that the geographic unity of the ranching community would be destroyed. The Western Stock Growers' Association favoured placing the boundary line farther east, and passed a resolution to this effect in May 1905, but to no avail. (D. H. Breen, "The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier, 1875-1922" [unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1972], pp. 296-98.)

[8] L. G. Thomas, pp. 11-14; *Daily Standard* (Regina) [hereafter cited as *Standard*], 13 March 1905.

Liberals believed he was had the same disastrous effect. Haultain's vigorous denunciation of the federal Liberal government during the 1904 election had widened the breach. He was later to claim that the members of his cabinet had always been free to take part in federal campaigns and that, in supporting the Conservative party in the 1904 election, he had simply exercised the freedom accorded to Liberals such as Ross, Sifton and Bulyea in the past.[9] It can be questioned whether Haultain had acted primarily in the interests of the North-West Territories or of the Conservative party, but in any case his actions had done little to strengthen his position in the negotiations with the Laurier government after the election.

Liberals in the Territories and at Ottawa now regarded Haultain as a political opponent. Haultain's support in the Territories and in the Territorial Assembly had become artificial and precarious. A division of the Assembly on federal party lines was prevented only by the pressure of political necessity upon its Liberal members.[10] In a single province Haultain's claims for the premiership would have been difficult to disregard, and in the event that the provincial legislature did immediately divide on federal party lines the Liberals would have found him a formidable opponent. From the point of view of party advantage, then, the creation of two provinces, with two governments and two sources of patronage, was far more attractive. At least one of the new administrations could be made securely Liberal from the outset. In the other province, Haultain might still be upset if a suitably attractive man could be found to oppose him.

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[9] *Standard*, 9 August 1905.

[10] Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," pp. 73-74.

The decision to retain control of the lands and natural resources of Alberta and Saskatchewan in federal hands is easily explained. The encouragement of western settlement was considered to be a matter of national concern, too important to be entrusted to uncertain and parochial local administrations. Clifford Sifton, the minister most directly responsible for federal immigration policy, was adamant that the *status quo* be maintained:

> As to the ... lands, giving them to the Provinces would be ruinous to our settlement policy and would be disastrous to the whole Dominion. The mere report that the lands had been handed over and that there might be a change in the policy of administering them would cost us tens of thousands of settlers in the next two years to say nothing of the more distant future. The continued progress of Canada for the next five years depends almost entirely on the flow of immigration.[11]

The western Liberal members assured Laurier that if a generous subsidy were provided the failure to gain control of the lands would not become a serious issue in the new provinces.[12] These assurances proved to be not entirely accurate, but the political repercussions of the decision to continue federal control of the public lands were mild indeed compared to the storm which erupted over Laurier's attempt to safeguard the educational rights of Roman Catholics in Alberta and Saskatchewan. It raised again the controversial question of separate schools, caused the resignation of a cabinet minister and precipitated a serious government crisis at Ottawa.

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[11] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, C. Sifton to Laurier, 22 January 1905, p. 93970.

[12] D. J. Hall, "The Political Career of Clifford Sifton, 1896-1905" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1973), Vol. II, p. 860.

Federal legislation, the North-West Territories Act of 1875, had made provision for the creation of a system of separate schools, and the ordinance of 1884, which established an educational system for the Territories under the control of a Board of Education, permitted the minority in any district to establish a separate school and assess themselves for its support.[13] The Board functioned in two sections and each, Roman Catholic and Protestant, exercised exclusive supervision over such matters as the management and inspection of schools, examination and licensing of teachers, and selection of textbooks. Subsequent ordinances gradually diminished the powers of the separate sections of the Board and provided instead for joint supervision of all schools. The final step in this process was taken in 1892 when the Board of Education was replaced by a Council of Public Instruction, consisting of members of the Executive Committee and representatives of each of the two religious groups, but with the latter having no vote.[14] The government now exercised effective control over both the separate and public systems in all important matters. A further ordinance of 1901 replaced the Council of Public Instruction with a Department of Education headed by a member of the government, the Commissioner of Education, and from 1901 to 1905 this portfolio was held by F. W. G. Haultain.[15]

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[13] Canada, *Statutes*, 38 Vic., Chapter 49, sec. 11; North-West Territories, *Ordinances*, 1884, No. 5.

[14] North-West Territories, *Ordinances*, 1892, No. 22.

Thus, while the original Territorial ordinance of 1884 made possible the establishment of a system of schools under clerical influence and control, "the Haultain government had legislated for uniformity and had 'administered' most of the separatism out of the school law."[16] The "separate" schools, and there were only eleven in operation in 1905,[17] were in fact "national" schools in all but name. Some protests were raised at the time of these changes, but the school system came to be accepted as generally satisfactory by most Territorial residents.[18]

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[15] *Ibid.*, 1901, Chapter 29. For a more detailed account of the establishment of a school system in the Territories and these subsequent modifications in its structure see M. R. Lupul, *The Roman Catholic Church and the North-West School Question: A Study in Church-State Relations in Western Canada, 1875-1905* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), pp. 12-161.

[16] Lingard, p. 159.

[17] *C.A.R.*, 1905, p. 47.

[18] E. Eager, "Separate Schools and the Cabinet Crisis of 1905," *The Lakehead University Review*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Fall, 1969), p. 96; Lupul, pp. 119-20, 129-35.

Laurier was under strong pressure from Ontario and the west to give the new provinces unrestricted control over education, but the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Canada and the French Canadian members from Quebec were equally insistent that minority school rights be given adequate protection when provincial status was granted.[19] Clifford Sifton and the other western Liberal members had agreed to include in the draft of the autonomy legislation a clause perpetuating the educational system as it existed in 1905. To Sifton and the other westerners the school clause in the legislation presented to the House seemed designed to restore the privileges which the Roman Catholics had lost in successive amendments of the Territorial school law.[20] This Sifton could not accept, and he resigned from the cabinet in protest.[21]

The introduction of the autonomy legislation brought forth a torrent of public criticism as well. Orange Lodges, Protestant clergy, church and lay organizations, members of the Opposition and even staunch Liberals demanded that the objectionable school clause be withdrawn. Ontario was the centre of the agitation.[22] In the North-West Territories, on the other hand, a Toronto *Globe* correspondent found

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[19] Hall, Vol. II, pp. 855-58; P. D. Stevens, "Laurier and the Liberal Party in Ontario, 1887-1911" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1966), pp. 262-80; H. B. Neatby, *Laurier and a Liberal Quebec: A Study in Political Management* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1973), pp. 150-54.

[20] PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, Letterbook, Sifton to J. W. Dafoe, 25 February 1905.

[21] *Ibid.*, Sifton to W. Laurier, 26 February 1905; same to same, 27 February 1905.

> ... that the school question really excites but a languid interest .... I can quite believe that if we hunted up all the fiery Methodist or Presbyterian clergy that strong expressions of opinion might be obtained, but the average Western man is not much worked up about it.

Regina and Edmonton were content because they had been made capitals, Calgary was a centre of discontent because it had not.[23] Such opposition to the school clause as could be found in the Territories, particularly after Sifton's resignation from the cabinet became known, was based largely on the feeling that the clause was an infringement of provincial rights and inimical to one of the main purposes of the public school: the assimilation of the growing number of "foreigners" there into the Canadian way of life.[24]

One of the most outspoken critics of the autonomy legislation was Premier Haultain. In an open letter to Laurier he declared his opposition to the creation of two provinces and two local governments where one had sufficed, apparently with general satisfaction, in the past. He objected also to the retention of the public lands by the federal government and to the scale of compensation to be provided in lieu of provincial control. Haultain's strongest words were reserved for the school clause which, he complained, had not been shown to the representatives of the Territorial government until noon of the day on which the legislation was introduced in the House. He vigorously defended the right of the new provinces to deal with the subject of education according to the provisions of the British North America Act. It was strictly a constitutional matter, involving the question of provincial rights, and not the rights of a religious minority " ... which must be properly and may be safely left to the Provincial Legislatures to deal with subject to the general constitutional provisions in that regard." What he demanded for Alberta and Saskatchewan were the same rights and powers as the older provinces of Canada enjoyed.[25]

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[22] Lingard, p. 170; E. McCartney, "The Interest of the Central Canadian Press, Particularly the Toronto Press, in the Autonomy Bills, 1905," *Canadian History Since Confederation: Essays and Interpretations*, ed. B. Hodgins and R. Page (Georgetown, Ontario: Irwin-Dorsey Limited, 1972), pp. 317-33.

[23] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. A. Ewan to Laurier, 1 March 1905, pp. 208833-34.

[24] *Ibid.*, J. Wilson to Laurier, 1 March 1905, p. 208845; T. M. Marshall to Laurier, 2 March 1905, p. 208894; J. Stueck to Laurier, 6 March 1905, pp. 209049-50; K. P. Dill to Laurier, 7 March 1905, pp. 209066-67.

In the midst of this public uproar, steps were being taken within the Liberal caucus to prepare a more acceptable version of the school clause. Sifton and his western colleagues submitted a new draft on 3 March, and by 11 March he could report that a settlement was "practically agreed upon."[26] The amended clause was presented by Laurier in moving second reading of the autonomy bills on 22 March. It secured exactly what the western members had originally agreed to, a continuation of the existing system, by specifically limiting the right of the minority to separate schools as they existed under the provisions of the Territorial ordinance of 1901.[27] With the substitution of this new clause public criticism subsided, in the English-speaking provinces if not in Quebec,[28] though in June two federal by-elections in Ontario were fought mainly on this issue. Premier Haultain took an active part in both campaigns, dealing with the school question and repeating the views he had expressed in his open letter to Laurier. The retention of both seats by government candidates was regarded by the Liberals as an endorsation of their policy,[29] while Haultain declared that he would continue to fight for the rights of the people of the North-West in one of the new provinces.[30] He believed that an appeal to the courts to determine the constitutionality of the school, public lands and C.P.R. exemption clauses of the autonomy bills could be made quietly by test cases and would in no way involve popular agitation or stir up religious bigotry.[31]

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[25] *Ibid.*, F. W. G. Haultain to Laurier, 11 March 1905, pp. 95679-91.

[26] PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, Letterbook, Sifton to W. Laurier, 3 March 1905; Sifton to J. W. Dafoe, 11 March 1905.

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[27] Eager, "Separate Schools," pp. 101-103.

[28] Lingard, p. 194.

[29] Eager, "Separate Schools," p. 111.

[30] *Standard,* 14 June 1905.

[31] *Ibid.*, 9 August 1905.

The Alberta and Saskatchewan Acts received final approval in July, and the new provinces officially came into existence on 1 September 1905.[32] The attention of politicians in Ottawa and Regina turned from the controversial questions of schools and public lands to more congenial matters: the choice of a Lieutenant-Governor and Premier, and preparations for the first provincial election. It seemed at the outset to be a virtual certainty that F. W. G. Haultain would be offered the premiership of one of the new provinces.[33] His claim for consideration was a strong one, for he had spent a long and active career in Territorial public life. In the end, though, Haultain was not called in either province.

It has been suggested that the Territorial Premier was passed over because of his outspoken opposition to the terms of the autonomy bills.[34] This explanation is not entirely satisfactory, for it does not take into account the accumulation of irritations which had strained relations between Haultain and the Liberals even before the bills were introduced in Parliament. Haultain's public criticism of the terms of the autonomy bills in his open letter to Laurier and his participation in the federal by-elections in Ontario certainly lost for him whatever support he might still have enjoyed among Liberals in the Territories and at Ottawa.[35] So far as Saskatchewan Liberals were concerned, Haultain's course of action "... has brought the North-West people generally to the opinion that he is an impossibility at least so far as we are concerned and so far as relates to his being called in either province as the first Premier." The Liberals could now decide upon party lines and at the same time place the blame entirely upon the Conservatives and upon Haultain.[36] Laurier himself remained convinced for some time that Haultain might still be offered the premiership of Alberta,[37] but Liberals in that province expressed their opposition in no uncertain terms.[38] By late July Laurier had agreed, perhaps reluctantly, that Haultain's claims should be ignored.[39]

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[32] Canada, *Statutes*, 4-5 Edw. VII, Chapter 42.

[33] See, for example, *Standard*, 7 February 1905.

[34] Lingard, pp. 248-49.

Haultain still had to be met in an election contest in one of the new provinces. It was generally believed that he would remain in Saskatchewan,[40] and this assumption was a major factor in determining who would become Liberal leader there. G. H. V. Bulyea had the best claim to the position through his long service to the Liberal party and his experience as a member of the Territorial government, but for practical political reasons many leading Liberals believed that he would not be acceptable. The fact that Bulyea had remained in Haultain's cabinet, even though it was at the party's insistence, weakened him in the eyes of many, and it was considered doubtful whether he could defeat Haultain.[41] Instead Bulyea was offered, and accepted, the position of Lieutenant-Governor of Alberta.[42] With Bulyea slated for Alberta, the choice of the Crown's representative for Saskatchewan was only a formality. Amédée Emmanuel Forget would remain in Regina, where he had served with distinction as Clerk of the Territorial Council and later of the Assembly, and, since 1898, as Lieutenant-Governor.[43]

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[35] Haultain believed it his right and responsibility to speak out against the autonomy terms in these campaigns, but, as C. C. Lingard has pointed out, "... it was not an act of political wisdom to embarrass further the Laurier government at that time." (*Ibid.*, p. 250.)

[36] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to D. H. McDonald, 22 July 1905, pp. 6154-55.

[37] *Ibid.*, Scott to G. H. V. Bulyea, 30 June 1905, p. 5327; Scott to G. W. Brown, 4 July 1905, p. 5247.

[38] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, C. W. Cross to P. Talbot, 3 July 1905, pp. 99255-57; A. C. Rutherford to P. Talbot, 4 July 1905, pp. 99305-306.

[39] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. H. V. Bulyea, 25 July 1905, pp. 5331-32.

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[40] *Ibid.*, Scott to G. W. Brown, 4 July 1905, p. 5247; Scott to J. A. Calder, 12 July 1905, p. 5386. In mid-August Haultain publicly announced that he intended to remain in Saskatchewan. (*Standard*, 16 August 1905.)

[41] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. A. Calder, 17 June 1905, p. 5366.

[42] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Laurier to G. H. V. Bulyea, 25 July 1905, pp. 100389-91; G. H. V. Bulyea to Laurier, 5 August 1905, pp. 100386-88.

[43] *Morning Leader* (Regina) [herafter cited as *Leader*], 6 September 1905; *C.P.G.*, 1905, p. 447.

Apart from Bulyea, two other Territorial Liberals were considered as possibilities to lead the party in Saskatchewan. One was James A. Calder. A graduate of Manitoba College and the Manitoba Normal School, Calder had taught for a time in that province before accepting the principalship of the high school in Moose Jaw in 1891. Three years later he was appointed a school inspector and in 1901 Deputy Commissioner of Education, serving in this latter capacity until July 1905, when he resigned from the Territorial civil service, ostensibly to begin the practice of law.[44] He was widely regarded as the "coming man" in the Liberal party but, like Bulyea, might not be a match for Haultain in an election contest.[45] With this Calder himself agreed, and he was most unwilling to take the leadership.[46]

The third possibility was that Walter Scott might be persuaded to resign his seat in the House of Commons and return to lead the provincial Liberals. Scott was another of those western men who, like Nicholas Flood Davin and Frank Oliver, had made the successful transition from journalism to politics. He had come to the west from Ontario at the age of seventeen, and had risen from printer's "devil" to reporter to owner of two Territorial newspapers, the Moose Jaw *Times* and the Regina *Leader*. Both became strong Liberal organs and their owner played an increasingly active role in the affairs of the local party organization. Scott was chosen to represent the Liberals in the federal constituency of West Assiniboia in 1900, and in a surprising upset, defeated the man who had represented the riding since 1887, N. F. Davin.[47] Scott declared in mid-June that he had no intention of entering the provincial field but admitted there was strong pressure on him to reconsider his decision.[48] He alone seemed to possess the necessary political skill, leadership and prestige to assure victory over Haultain.[49] By the end of the month Scott had tentatively agreed to lead the Liberals in Saskatchewan if called by the party.[50]

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[44] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. A. Calder, 17 June 1905, pp. 5367-68; *Leader*, 5 July 1905; A. R. Turner, ed., "Reminiscences of the Hon. J. A. Calder," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXV, No. 2 (Spring, 1972), pp. 55-62.

[45] AS, Walter Scott Papers, G. W. Brown to Scott, 28 June 1905, pp. 5237-38.

[46] *Ibid.*, J. A. Calder to Scott, 20 June 1905, pp. 5377-78.

The Liberals met in convention at Regina on 16 August 1905. The first item of business for the more than two hundred delegates present was the consideration of a resolution which, noting that the Territorial Conservatives had in 1903 declared in favour of contesting the next election on party lines, committed the Liberals to a similar course. The delegates apparently welcomed the prospect of a straight party fight, for they passed the resolution without a single dissenting vote.[51]

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[47] D. H. Bocking, "Premier Walter Scott: His Early Career," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XIII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1960), pp. 81-99.

[48] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. A. Calder, 17 June 1905, p. 5367.

[49] *Ibid.*, G. W. Brown to Scott, 28 June 1905, pp. 5239-46.

[50] *Ibid.*, Scott to G. W. Brown, 4 July 1905, p. 5249.

The convention then proceeded to create a provincial Liberal organization, select a leader and adopt a platform. The only name put in nomination for the leadership was that of Walter Scott, and his selection, and his fighting speech to the delegates, were approved with much enthusiasm. He promised Saskatchewan progressive and practical government, not "... test cases, threatening the peace and raising disturbances and paralysing all ... activity." With its "illimitable rich acres" there could be no doubt that Saskatchewan would soon become "the banner province of Canada."[52] To bring about such a condition of affairs the platform pledged the Liberal party to expand the educational system for the benefit of all classes and nationalities; to provide improved transportation facilities through the construction of roads and bridges, the encouragement of the building of railway branch lines and the completion of the Hudson Bay railway; to secure public control of public utilities and generally to assist the agricultural and ranching industries so as to "... advance in every way possible the prosperity of the Province and its citizens."[53]

Saskatchewan Conservatives were also preparing to hold a convention which took place in Regina a week after the Liberal gathering. There was considerable speculation as to the stand the Conservatives would take on the question of party lines. Haultain had made it clear that he was still opposed to the introduction of federal party names and divisions in the provincial sphere. Diverse opinions on the tariff or other federal matters, he declared in an open letter published on 9 August 1905, need not prevent co-operation with regard to roads and bridges, schools and the many other practical subjects with which the Legislature would necessarily have to deal. The "best men" of the new province ought not to be divided by meaningless distinctions which had nothing to do with local matters. His strongest argument against introducing party lines in the province was to become part of a recurring theme in Saskatchewan and prairie politics:

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[51] *Leader*, 23 August 1905.

[52] *Ibid.*

[53] *Ibid.*

> We want governments which are quite independent of Ottawa. We want men who when Western interests are involved will work with a single eye to those interests without regard to party interest or convenience.[54]

Haultain was not alone in voicing these sentiments, for there could still be found in Saskatchewan in 1905 some of the latent distrust of "partyism" inherited from the political experience of the Territories.[55] On the other hand there were Conservatives who were believed to favour the introduction of party lines.[56]

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[54] *Standard*, 9 August 1905.

[55] See, for example, *Grenfell Sun*, 21 August 1905; *Standard*, 23 August 1905.

[56] *Standard*, 23 August 1905.

The question would obviously have to be resolved at the convention.

The delegates decided, though not without some opposition, to constitute a Provincial Rights party which would seek support from all those who, regardless of party affiliation, desired full provincial rights for Saskatchewan. An appeal would be made to the highest courts to test the constitutionality of those sections of the Saskatchewan Act which denied the province full control of its public lands and natural resources, restricted its powers of taxation and interfered with its freedom to pass legislation in relation to schools.[57] In other respects the Provincial Rights platform was not very different from that adopted earlier by the Liberals. It too promised the construction of an extensive network of roads and bridges, the encouragement of railway lines, assistance to agriculture, public ownership of public utilities, and improvements in the education system, including the creation of a provincial university completely free from sectarian influence or political control.[58]

As the date of the inauguration of the new province approached, all eyes centred on Regina, and the celebrations which would take place there on 4 September. Special excursion trains brought hundreds of visitors, including the 90th Regimental Band from Winnipeg, and the city was decorated with flags, bunting and displays of the agricultural products for which the province was to become so famous. Governor-General Earl Grey and Prime Minister Laurier were present for the festivities, and for the more serious business of swearing in the Lieutenant-Governor of the new province, A. E. Forget. There was a parade in the morning, followed by the swearing-in ceremonies at the fair grounds, a luncheon at Government House, a presentation of the Mounties' "musical ride" and in the evening a lavish ball in the rink and a fireworks display in Victoria Park.[59] It was a time for buoyant optimism and predictions, such as this one offered by the Regina *Leader*, that Saskatchewan's future was bright with promise:

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[57] *Ibid.*, 24 August 1905; *West* (Regina), 30 August 1905.

[58] *Standard*, 24 August 1905.

> No other province has an equal area of cultivable land; Saskatchewan is bound to lead in grain products, and to become at least second only to Alberta as a meat producer .... A steady stream of thrifty immigration is directing its footsteps this way and the eyes of the whole English-speaking world and of the European countries are turned towards these fertile plains.[60]

The first official act of Lieutenant-Governor Forget was to call on some one to form a ministry, and his choice of Walter Scott brought forth vehement condemnation in Saskatchewan and elsewhere. By passing over Haultain, one newspaper charged, the Lieutenant-Governor had made himself the willing instrument of the federal Liberal "machine."[61] Party considerations of course influenced the decision. Haultain's outspoken opposition to the very terms under which the province of Saskatchewan had come into existence, the pressure of western Liberals who since 1903 harboured an increasing suspicion and dislike of the Territorial Premier, and the natural desire of the federal party to see a friendly administration established in each of the new provinces all dictated that Scott, not Haultain, be chosen as the first Premier of Saskatchewan.

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[59] Drake, pp. 127-28.

[60] *Leader*, 6 September 1905.

[61] *Standard*, 6 September 1905.

It has been suggested that the passing over of Haultain in 1905 was as constitutionally unjustified as would have been the passing over of John A. Macdonald in 1867,[62] but this argument ignores the fact that Macdonald was a staunch supporter of the settlement which brought Canada into being while Haultain was a determined opponent of the settlement of 1905.[63] There is little reason to quarrel with the claim that "the Lieutenant-Governor deprived Mr. Haultain of the opportunity of forming the first Saskatchewan administration through His Honour's acceptance of advice tendered him by the Laurier government,"[64] but it does not necessarily follow that Forget's choice of Scott was improper.

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[62] Lingard, pp. 249-50.

[63] J. T. Saywell, "Liberal Politics, Federal Policies, and the Lieutenant-Governor: Saskatchewan and Alberta, 1905," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. VIII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1955), pp. 87-88.

[64] Lingard, p. 249.

The Lieutenant-Governor might have been expected to select as Premier the leader of the party which had the support of the people, and two factors, imprecise though they might be, suggest that Haultain no longer commanded a majority of such support by 1905. The political affiliation of the majority in the Territorial Assembly at the time of its dissolution was Liberal, and seven of the ten Territorial members returned to the House of Commons in the election of 1904, which was fought partly on local issues, were also Liberals.[65] The only true test would be the first provincial election, which the Saskatchewan Act dictated must come within six months.[66] It would decide who possessed the confidence of a majority of Saskatchewan residents.

Premier Scott immediately set about the task of forming a cabinet to assist him in the administration of government business, and he and his colleagues were sworn in on 12 September 1905. Scott took the Public Works portfolio for himself. James A. Calder became Commissioner of Education and Provincial Treasurer. The Commissioner of Agriculture and Provincial Secretary was W. R. Motherwell, president of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association, and J. H. Lamont, a lawyer and member of the House of Commons for Prince Albert since 1904, was named Attorney-General.[67] Scott had also considered taking in one or two members without portfolio, but decided against it for fear of raising jealousy.[68] He denied all rumours of friction and difficulty which had been circulating prior to the announcement of the cabinet, but in fact it appears that Lamont would have preferred to remain at Ottawa or, failing that, be appointed to the bench. He wrote to Laurier after the cabinet was sworn in urging consideration of his claims for a judicial appointment should the Scott government be defeated in the coming elections.[69]

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[65] Saywell, p. 88.

[66] Canada, *Statutes*, 4-5 Edw., Chapter 42, sec. 15.

[67] *Leader*, 13 September 1905.

The new cabinet might have great potential, but an opposition newspaper was moved to remark, with some degree of justification, that its chief characteristic was "legislative ignorance."[70] Only Premier Scott possessed any considerable experience as a legislator. Lamont had spent one session at Ottawa and Calder had some knowledge of Territorial administration, particularly in educational matters. Motherwell possessed no experience in government, though he was a veteran of the annual Grain Growers' conventions, or "farmers' parliaments," as they came to be called. With the exception of Scott, they were new men, and nowhere was this more apparent than in their lack of political experience. Calder was to prove a master of the intricacies of party organization, but he was still very much an unknown quantity in 1905 for he had taken no active part in politics until his resignation from the Territorial civil service.[71] As for Motherwell, his political experience had not been of a kind to inspire confidence: twice a candidate in Territorial elections, he had been soundly defeated both times.[72]

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[68] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. Thomson, 11 September 1905, p. 37799.

[69] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. H. Lamont to Laurier, 14 September 1905, pp. 101160-62.

[70] *Standard*, 13 September 1905.

Their opponent in the coming elections would be a man who for eighteen years had been the almost undisputed leader of the Territories and whose reputation as an able administrator stood high. Liberals readily admitted that Haultain would have great strength, especially in the southern part of the new province.[73] It was along the C.P.R. main line, an area which had been settled before the turn of the century, and largely by people of British or Ontario stock, that Haultain's contribution to the development of the Territories would be most appreciated and the sense of outrage over the denial of full provincial rights and of his claim to the Saskatchewan premiership most acute. Even here, though, Haultain's position was far from impregnable. While his decision to organize a Provincial Rights party might enable Haultain to hold much of the support he had enjoyed as Territorial Premier and win over any Liberals who had reservations about some of the terms of the Saskatchewan Act, it remained to be seen whether he would be able to make an abstract constitutional issue clear enough to win the support of a majority of the electorate. It remained to be seen, too, how Haultain would fare in more recently settled areas, and particularly in areas inhabited mainly by American or European-born immigrants,[74] where his personal prestige was not likely to be as great.

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[71] Turner, "Reminiscences of J. A. Calder," p. 62.

[72] Turner, "Emergence of a Farm Leader," pp. 98-100.

[73] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. W. Brown, 4 July 1905, pp. 5248-49.

Among the advantages which could be expected to accrue to the Liberals none was perhaps more important than the fact that they would have control of provincial and federal patronage. In addition, they would be able to call the election to suit their convenience, and Scott and his colleagues undoubtedly hoped that prosperity would encourage Saskatchewan farmers to vote for the government in office. The Liberals could also make use of the official machinery of the Department of the Interior to encourage settlers to support the party under whose auspices vast numbers had recently entered the west, and whose officials, the homestead inspectors, could in so many ways make it easy or difficult for a settler to satisfy the homestead regulations. It would be a stiff fight, and though the writs might not be issued for some time, the election contest in fact began as soon as the Scott cabinet took office.[75] A few days later one Regina observer commented on the prospects for both sides:

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[74] By 1906 these American and European-born settlers numbered more than 90,000 out of a total population of 257,763. (Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Population and Agriculture of the Northwest Provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, 1906* [Ottawa: King's Printer, 1907], p. 86.)

> To get the Liberals into a sufficiently firm and aggressive attitude on the schools question - and out of one of excuse and defence is a hard job. They seem rather afraid of Haultain, which arises from a considerable general respect for him. When Mr. Scott gets on the stump he shall, no doubt, be aggressive enough - meantime the Tories have an advantage in their aggressive attitude. I think they will be handsomely beaten, however ....[76]

The election campaign was fought mainly on the autonomy terms. Haultain and his colleagues argued that Saskatchewan was being deprived of its full rights as a province,[77] while Scott and the Liberals defended the terms of the Saskatchewan Act and claimed that its generous financial provisions would enable the new province to remain forever free from debt.[78] Haultain's appeal for support irrespective of federal party distinctions, which Scott had privately admitted was "the shrewdest appeal open to him,"[79] attracted a number of prominent Liberals to his side. Among these were A. D. McIntyre, a member of the old Territorial Assembly, who had moved the resolution on party lines at the Liberal convention in August, and J. T. Brown, a prominent young Moosomin lawyer, who had also taken an active part in that convention.[80] Brown, McIntyre and at least two other Liberals accepted nominations as Provincial Rights candidates, and in other constituencies Liberals served on local executive committees.[81]

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[75] *Standard*, 13 September 1905; *Leader*, 20 September 1905.

[76] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, E. W. Thomson to Laurier, 15 September 1905, p. 101249.

[77] *Herald* (Whitewood), 21 September 1905; *Saskatoon Phenix*, 22 September 1905; *The Public Lands Robbery! How the New Provinces are Plundered under the Compensation Clauses* (n.p., 1905?).

[78] *Standard*, 23 September 1905; *Splendid Lands Bargain* (n.p., 1905?).

[79] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to T. A. Burrows, 23 August 1905, p. 5351.

The school question caused the greatest difficulty for the government, particularly in southern Saskatchewan, where even many Liberal supporters were confused about it.[82] Haultain claimed that the issue was not whether separate schools should be permitted but whether the province should submit to coercion from Ottawa in the matter. At the very first opportunity he promised to submit a test case before the proper courts. "Then, if the educational clauses are declared unconstitutional, I shall leave it to the people to say whether we shall have separate schools or not."[83] The Liberals tried to show that Haultain's policy might lead to the reappearance of separate schools under clerical control while their policy ensured the continued public control of all schools.[84] So diligently did the Liberals pursue Haultain on the question of schools that Scott received some friendly advice:

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[80] *Ibid.*, J. T. Brown to Scott, 7 September 1905, pp. 37787-88; *Standard*, 2 October 1905.

[81] *Standard,* 2 October 1905, 24 October 1905; *Leader,* 8 November 1905.

[82] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. W. Dafoe, 27 October 1905, p. 37881.

[83] *Progress* (Qu'Appelle), 19 October 1905.

> You are going a little too much on the defensive .... Calder is spending *too much time* on the school question. It is important and serious as I always knew but it is the cue of the opposition to exaggerate its importance & should be your cue to minimize it.[85]

The Liberals wished to make the need for better railway facilities and for more competition for the long-established C.P.R. a major issue in the campaign.[86] Scott repeatedly asked the federal government to announce its willingness to guarantee the bonds of a proposed Canadian Northern line from southern Manitoba to Regina, and to assist the construction of a railway to Hudson Bay.[87] A public commitment by Ottawa to aid these two projects would be of great help in the campaign, Scott believed, for it would "... better than anything else, take people's eyes off the school question."[88] The Canadian Northern project was important to Scott for another reason as well. He was convinced that the C.P.R. was actively assisting the Provincial Rights campaign and that he must have the new railway in order to win in southern Saskatchewan.[89] Laurier pledged his own support for both projects but found his colleagues more difficult to convince.[90] The matter was temporarily shelved when the cabinet dispersed,[91] but Scott continued to hope for favourable word from Ottawa. He had originally intended to hold the Saskatchewan elections on the same day as the Alberta contest, and his continued delay in this matter brought criticism from those newspapers which were friendly to Haultain.[92] Late in October, in a state of near desperation, the Premier warned Laurier that he could not afford to wait much longer before issuing the writs, and certainly not beyond 9 November, the date of the Alberta election. Unless favourable word concerning the two railway projects was received by that date, Scott announced, he would tender his resignation to the Lieutenant-Governor and go back to newspaper work.[93] Laurier promised that the matters would be considered as soon as possible, but nothing was done and Scott called the election for 13 December without the conditions he deemed necessary for success.[94] Scott did not carry out his threat to resign, possibly because the results in Alberta were so encouraging,[95] but perhaps also because Clifford Sifton arranged a large campaign contribution.[96]

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[84] *Leader*, 4 October 1905, 11 October 1905; *Saskatoon Phenix*, 6 October 1905; J. A. Calder, *The School Question in the New Provinces* (n.p., 1905?).

[85] AS, Walter Scott Papers, C. Sifton to Scott, 25 October 1905, pp. 37864-65. (emphasis in original.)

[86] See, for example, *Railway Competition for Saskatchewan vs. C.P.R. Monopoly* (n.p., 1905?).

[87] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 22 July 1905, p. 99906a; same to same, 12 August 1905, pp. 100584-85; same to same, 22 August 1905, p. 100780; same to same, 4 September 1905, p. 101003.

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[88] *Ibid.*, W. Scott to Laurier, 18 October 1905, p. 102268.

[89] As proof of his contention Scott pointed to the fact that a C.P.R. locomotive engineer and station agent had been nominated as Provincial Rights candidates in Moose Jaw and Batoche, respectively. He also suspected that the active organization work being carried out by his opponents in all parts of the province was financed by that railway corporation. (*Ibid.*, W. Scott to Laurier, 28 October 1905, pp. 102537-38.) During the campaign Liberal newspapers hinted darkly that the C.P.R. was openly working to assist Haultain and defeat the government (*Leader,* 20 September 1905, 8 November 1905; *Humboldt Journal*, 24 November 1905), though Premier Scott himself admitted that this argument could not be made as effectively as in Alberta, where R. B. Bennett, the Conservative leader, was the company's solicitor. (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. S. G. Van Wort, 11 November 1905, p. 37919.)

[90] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Laurier to W. Scott, 21 August 1905, p. 100586.

[91] *Ibid.*, Laurier to W. Scott, 24 October 1905, pp. 192269-70; AS, Walter Scott Papers, C. Sifton to Scott, 25 October 1905, pp. 37861-63.

Premier Scott candidly admitted that "the Alberta result ought to do us good, particularly in all the new settlements."[97] On the other hand, Haultain's supporters were not disheartened by the stunning defeat of the Conservatives in that province. Their Alberta brethren had made the mistake of fighting the election on straight party lines, had the bitter sectional rivalry over the location of the capital to contend with, faced three-cornered contests in many ridings and had been poorly organized. Such conditions did not exist in Saskatchewan, they believed, and a different result could be expected.[98]

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[92] *Ibid.*, Scott to W. J. Gilliland, 3 October 1905, p. 37826; *Standard,* 14 October 1905.

[93] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 28 October 1905, pp. 102538-39.

[94] *Ibid.*, Laurier to W. Scott, 4 November 1905, pp. 102540-41; *Leader,* 22 November 1905.

[95] In Alberta the Liberals won all the seats but two. (L. G. Thomas, p. 28.) Clifford Sifton, for one, certainly urged Scott to reconsider in the light of the overwhelming Liberal victory in Alberta. (AS, Walter Scott Papers, C. Sifton to Scott, n.d., p. 37869.)

[96] PAC, G. P. Graham Papers, W. Scott to C. Sifton, 18 March 1911, p. 32302. In this letter Scott referred to the assistance which Sifton had secured in 1905.

One serious difficulty for the Provincial Rights party was that of contacting and influencing the "hundreds of strangers in the province, who born in other lands, know little or nothing of our political life and its problems."[99] Their Liberal opponents made a special attempt to secure the "foreign vote" by appealing to individuals who were thought to possess some influence among these people;[100] by printing campaign literature in German, Ruthenian and other languages;[101] and by making certain that all immigrants eligible for citizenship before the date of the election, and consequently eligible to vote, were naturalized.[102] The Liberals also made a special appeal to Roman Catholics, pointing out that the Conservatives were stirring up racial and religious prejudice and that the Orange Lodge had sent a letter to all Protestants complaining of the dominance of the Church of Rome and Catholic Quebec in Saskatchewan.[103]

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[97] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to A. W. Hotham, 11 November 1905, p. 37911.

[98] *Standard*, 11 November 1905.

[99] *Ibid.*, 20 September 1905.

[100] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to M. Wodlinger, 12 September 1905, p. 37804; Scott to Rev. L. K. Kovacsi, 30 September 1905, p. 37825; Scott to T. Schmitz, 15 November 1905, p. 37923.

[101] *Ibid.*, Scott to A. Ross, 30 October 1905, p. 37889; *Die Liberale Platform* (Regina: Rundschau Publishing Company, 1905?).

Religious prejudice and personalities were important in the Saskatchewan campaign, particularly during the last few weeks. In late November the Regina Conservative newspapers and others throughout the province published what was alleged to be a pastoral letter from Archbishop Langevin of St. Boniface which had been read in many churches in Saskatchewan. This document criticized Haultain for his position on separate schools and urged Roman Catholics to "... unite and vote for those who are in favor of the actual system of separate schools though these schools are neutral because it is a partial recognition of their rights as free citizens of this country."[104] The Archbishop's advice to his people became a sensational issue in the election. It gave Haultain the opportunity to win the support of all the anti-Catholic vote in the province, and threatened disaster for the Liberals.

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[102] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to A. Ross, 27 November 1905, p. 37952. The thoroughness with which the Liberals approached this work led to complaints by opposition newspapers that naturaliziation forms were being issued to men who had not resided the necessary three years in Canada. (See, for example, *Standard*, 11 December 1905.)

[103] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. B. Fayant, 7 November 1905, p. 37903.

[104] *Standard*, 22 November 1905; *West* (Regina), 22 November 1905; *Vidette* (Indian Head), 29 November 1905.

The leader of the Provincial Rights party issued an address to the electorate on 27 November. In it Haultain first mentioned certain correspondence with the Archbishop in which he had sought some clarification of the reasons for Langevin's opposition to him. Haultain then went on to declare that an understanding existed between the Liberal party and the Roman Catholic church which forced him to change his position on the school question:

> So long as I was satisfied that the present school system could be worked out satisfactorily and without the sacrifice of important principles of administration, I was personally quite willing to leave it unchanged. But this conspiracy between the Roman Catholic church and a political party I can only look upon as a menace to our school system, and to the sound principles upon which it has been established ... As the matter now stands, it is clear to me that the only safety for our educational system lies in once and for all establishing it on an absolutely national basis, with equal rights to all and special privileges to none.[105]

During the last two weeks of the campaign Haultain and his press and party supporters talked of little else but the "menace" of clerical interference in the political and educational affairs of the province.[106]

Haultain might have relied on Langevin's "pastoral letter" alone to discredit the government, but he chose to add the charge that a compact existed between the Liberals and the Roman Catholics. The Liberals were unable to say anything about the Archbishop's instructions to Catholics except to protest that the document was in fact not a pastoral letter and had not been read in any churches,[107] but they could and did deny that any agreement had been made to restore denominational separate schools in return for political support. Scott challenged Haultain to meet him in public debate and prove these charges.[108] Haultain's reply was evasive,[109] and when the two leaders did meet late in the campaign he was forced to admit that he had no proof to support his compact charge.[110]

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[105] *Standard*, 2 December 1905.

[106] *Ibid.*, 30 November 1905, 4 December 1905, 8 December 1905; *West* (Regina), 6 December 1905.

One of the most dramatic incidents of the whole campaign occurred a week before the election, when the Premier was publicly accused of attempted bribery. Through his newspaper, the Regina *Standard,* J. K. McInnis charged that Scott had offered him $12,000 for a property worth only $2,000 if he would agree to support the

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[107] *Leader,* 29 November 1905. Archbishop Langevin also denied that the document was a pastoral letter or that it had been read in any churches. It was, Langevin claimed, simply a memorandum containing a "recital of the plain facts which constitute the grievances of Catholics against Haultain's administration." (*Ibid.,* 6 December 1905.)

[108] *Ibid.,* 6 December 1905.

[109] *Standard,* 7 December 1905.

[110] *Leader,* 13 December 1905.

Liberals in the election campaign.[111] Scott at once laid a charge of criminal libel against his former business partner.[112] During a campaign speech at Wolseley, Scott was compelled to defend himself on the public platform against the bribery charges when McInnis appeared without warning at the meeting. The Premier admitted that he had privately conveyed to McInnis an offer for his share in a railway charter, but claimed that the offer had been made by a syndicate and that he acted only as their agent.[113] Following the Wolseley meeting Scott assured the people of Saskatchewan that he would clear himself of the bribery charges or retire from public life.[114]

The 1905 contest, "a warm kind of a scrimmage" as Scott called it,[115] resulted in a victory for the Liberals. A week after the election Scott could report that his government held fourteen "absolutely safe" seats and was likely also to take Prince Albert County, Kinistino and Regina City.[116] The final result was sixteen seats for the Liberals and nine for the Provincial Rights party. The four members of the cabinet were returned, Motherwell and Scott by wide margins. Haultain emerged the easy victor in South Qu'Appelle, with a majority of more than 400. Liberal candidates were successful in twelve of the thirteen ridings north of the C.P.R. main line. The Provincial Rights party won eight of the twelve southern seats and lost the others by margins of from 3 to 73 votes.[117] Overall, the Liberals obtained 52.2 per cent of the popular vote, the Provincial Rights party 47.5 per cent and 0.3 per cent went to an independent candidate who ran in Prince Albert City, the only constituency in which a three-cornered contest occurred.[118]

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[111] *Standard,* 7 December 1905.

[112] *C.A.R.*, 1905, p. 258.

[113] *Leader,* 11 December 1905.

[114] *Ibid.*

[115] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. M. Reid, 4 January 1906, p. 38066.

[116] *Ibid.*, Scott to C. Sifton, 20 December 1905, p. 37996.

The government's opponents were quick to conclude that the distribution of seats demonstrated that the "old settled districts," where the "intelligent vote" resided, had declared against federal and clerical interference in Saskatchewan affairs by returning Provincial Rights candidates, while the "back settlements," where the vote of the "ignorant foreigners" was widely regarded as a solid Liberal vote, had elected supporters of the Scott government.[119] The explanation of the 1905 election result is, in fact, rather more complex than this. The question of separate schools was hotly debated throughout the campaign, and there is little doubt that it exercised a significant influence on the result. The Liberals were victorious in the seven ridings in which large numbers of Roman Catholics, Mennonites, Doukhobors or Greek Catholics resided, while in all of the nine seats won by Provincial Rights candidates the population was mainly Protestant.[120] In Moose Jaw County, a Protestant constituency won by the Liberals, the religious issue was clearly a major factor. The Liberal candidate won by only 66 votes, and Scott was convinced that most of this majority had been secured at the Willow Bunch poll, which was composed mainly of French Catholics.[121]

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[117] *Saskatchewan Executive and Legislative Directory, 1905-1970* [hereafter cited as *Legislative Directory*] (Regina: Saskatchewan Archives Board, 1971), pp. 93-157.

[118] Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," p. 344.

[119] *Prince Albert Times*, 14 December 1905; *Standard*, 15 December 1905; *Vidette* (Indian Head), 20 December 1905; *Progress* (Qu'Appelle), 21 December 1905.

The publication of Archbishop Langevin's memorandum three weeks before the election had important consequences for both parties. The Regina *Standard* complained that most Roman Catholics had been afraid to vote contrary to the Archbishop's instructions, with disastrous results for Provincial Rights candidates in a number of ridings.[122] Premier Scott was convinced that the document, and the fear of clerical domination which it raised, cost the Liberals at least five seats and "scores of votes ... in many other constituencies."[123] Haultain might have won the election with "... the piece of ammunition that Langevin furnished him," Scott believed, "but his crowning tactical blunder was to make the 'compact' accusation early enough to allow me time to answer and challenge him to the proof when he had no proof."[124] Unquestionably the memorandum cost the Liberals some seats, but it did not become the disaster it might have been had Haultain handled his opportunity more skilfully.

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[120] Bocking, "Premier Scott: A Study," pp. 130, 140-41.

[121] *Legislative Directory*, p. 121; AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. Hanmer, 5 January 1906, pp. 38069-70.

[122] *Standard*, 15 December 1905.

And what of the charge that the "old settled districts" had voted for Haultain and the "back settlements" for Scott? It is difficult to generalize about settlement patterns in Saskatchewan, for often relatively recently developed areas were to be found in close proximity to old established ones, but it can be noted that the Liberals won the largest number of seats in the area north of the C.P.R. main line, much of which had been settled since the turn of the century. The strength of the Provincial Rights party lay along and south of that line. The only northern seat won by a Haultain supporter was Prince Albert County, and it was one of the oldest settlements in Saskatchewan. Premier Scott's promise of railways and other forms of assistance to the farming population may have been more important in these recently settled areas than any abstract question of provincial rights. Indeed railways were a matter of prime concern even in the old settled portions of southern

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[123] *Leader*, 13 December 1905.

[124] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. Hawkes, 10 January 1906, p. 38090.

Saskatchewan. Scott was convinced that the Liberals had lost Moosomin, Whitewood, Grenfell, Wolseley and South Qu'Appelle partly because the federal government failed to provide assistance for a proposed Canadian Northern line which would have passed through those ridings.[125] In another way, too, railways may have been important in influencing the result of the election. Liberals believed that the Canadian Pacific was actively campaigning against them, and Scott blamed the defeat of the government candidate in Moose Jaw, a C.P.R. divisional point, on the open opposition of the railway.[126]

The Liberals possessed a decisive advantage over their opponents in their ability to command the almost solid support of what Conservative newspapers were to so often label the "ignorant foreign vote." Haultain's candidate in Regina opened committee rooms in the city's cosmopolitan "east end" and enlisted the support of German speakers in his campaign,[127] but in the province as a whole any attempts by the Provincial Rights party to secure the support of those whose mother tongue was not English apparently met with little success. In the riding of Humboldt, for example, which contained a large German Catholic population, no Provincial Rights candidate was even nominated, and the Liberals won the seat by acclamation.[128] Haultain and his colleagues may have shared that attitude of racial superiority which periodically appeared in Conservative newspaper editorials and which implied that the "foreign vote" was a second-class vote. Even were this not the case, it would be difficult in 1905 or in the years to come for Haultain to persuade these citizens so recently arrived from Europe or the United States that their success in a new land was not the result of Liberal policies alone or that there were not good practical reasons for continuing to support the party which seemed most likely to form the government. While the Liberals had worked for and counted on the support of these voters, it is clear that even in 1905 they did not always get it. The German vote apparently split in South Qu'Appelle, and this allowed Haultain to win with a surprisingly large majority.[129] The Liberals also counted on the foreign vote to win the Grenfell seat, but apparently they were unable to secure it and lost the riding.[130]

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[125] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 16 December 1905, p. 104368.

[126] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to O. B. Fysh, 28 December 1905, p. 38034. Broadview, another divisional point on the C.P.R., also cast a majority against the Liberals. (PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, G. H. V. Bulyea to Laurier, 26 December 1905, p. 104659.)

[127] *Standard*, 14 October 1905.

There is little doubt that political strategy was also important in determining the outcome of the 1905 contest. Haultain's appeal for support irrespective of federal party distinctions influenced the result in a number of ridings. Liberals admitted during the campaign that party ties were not very strong and that many of their supporters were following Haultain.[131] It would appear that A. B. Gillis, the Provincial Rights candidate in Whitewood, won the seat easily because he was able to retain the support of Liberals who had voted for him in previous Territorial elections. J. T. Brown, a former Liberal, was elected as the Provincial Rights candidate in Souris by a wide margin, partly because many Liberal supporters were not willing to vote for the regular Liberal candidate.[132] The defection of a prominent Liberal supporter in Wolseley near the end of the campaign was one cause of the defeat of the government candidate in that riding.[133] As part of his campaign strategy Scott had arranged to place all the cabinet ministers, including himself, in difficult constituencies. It was a risk, the Premier later admitted,

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[128] *Legislative Directory*, p. 106.

[129] *Progress* (Qu'Appelle), 21 December 1905.

[130] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. G. Turriff, 26 September 1905, p. 37812.

> ... but it is the bold play that usually wins in politics. Lamont and myself both throwing up Dominion seats to tackle this helped greatly to give our people confidence in the idea that Haultain was not so overwhelming as he looked. South Regina, North Qu'Appelle and Prince Albert City would be lost to us but for the bold play, and without those three seats for the Government of Saskatchewan would

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[131] *Ibid.*, A. S. Smith to Scott, 7 September 1905, p. 37794; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. H. Lamont to Laurier, 14 September 1905, pp. 101160-61; J. H. Lamont to C. Fitzpatrick, 17 October 1905, p. 102236.

[132] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. G. Turriff, 26 September 1905, pp. 36812-13.

[133] *Ibid.*, Scott to L. Thomson, 28 December 1905, p. 38038.

today be facing political chaos.[134]

Liberal control of the federal and provincial governments has been described as the decisive factor in the 1905 Alberta election,[135] and it was no less important in Saskatchewan. Control of the two governments meant control of patronage. The Liberal party would determine who received appointments to government jobs and public works appropriations could be used to win political support. Not for the last time did its opponents claim in 1905 that the machinery of the Regina and Ottawa governments had been employed to ensure a Liberal victory.[136] Closely related to their control of the government was the effective political organization which the Liberals had begun to create in Saskatchewan. Scott regarded the election result as "proof to me that the present political sentiment in Saskatchewan is overwhelmingly Liberal, and also that our organization was pretty effective."[137] The Liberals acquired the reputation of leaving nothing to chance in an election campaign and this, even in 1905, prompted accusations that the "machine" won by corrupt methods.[138] The irregularities in Prince Albert County lent colour to such charges. The government candidate, P. D. Tyerman, seemed to have won the seat, but as it turned out he did so largely on the strength of 151 fraudulent ballots cast at three northern polls. His opponent, S. J. Donaldson, eventually discovered that the three polls had never been held, and laid charges against the deputy returning officers (two of whom were federal government officials). The three were found guilty, but not until 1907 was Donaldson able to take his rightful place in the Legislature.[139]

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[134] *Ibid.*, Scott to J. Hawkes, 10 January 1906, p. 38091. The nomination of an independent Liberal candidate in Prince Albert City made the situation there more difficult for Lamont, and he secured only a plurality of the total vote cast in that riding. (PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. F. A. Turgeon à O. Turgeon, 26 septembre 1905, pp. 101779-81; *Legislative Directory*, p. 130.) Early in the campaign Motherwell broke his leg, and the accident may have helped to secure his election in North Qu'Appelle for, as Scott suggested, "a sympathy cry is sometimes a strong factor." (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to W. T. Lawler, 16 October 1905, p. 37841.)

[135] L. G. Thomas, pp. 29-30.

[136] *Standard*, 16 December 1905, *Vidette* (Indian Head), 20 December 1905; *Grenfell Sun*, 21 December 1905.

A combination of factors, then, accounted for the Liberal victory in this first Saskatchewan election. The Scott government received the support of Catholics who favoured separate schools, and moderate Protestants who were at least willing to continue the system as it existed in 1905; newcomers to the province who equated prosperity and success with Liberalism, or who were astute enough to realize that a vote for the government would hasten the construction of roads and bridges and railway facilities in areas of the province only recently settled and all those who anticipated some personal favour or benefit from the patronage which a Liberal government could dispense to the party faithful.

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[137] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. H. Ross, 22 December 1905, p. 38019.

[138] *Saskatchewan Herald* (Battleford), 13 December 1905.

[139] *Prince Albert Times*, 28 December 1905, 25 January 1906. On 2 April 1907, by order of the Legislative Assembly, the 151 fraudulent ballots cast for Tyerman were set aside, and Donaldson was declared duly elected. (*Legislative Directory*, p. 131.)

The Saskatchewan Liberals did not have the overwhelming majority of their Alberta colleagues, but it was large enough to enable the government to function effectively. Indeed Scott regarded the presence of a vigorous Opposition as the best possible guarantee of Liberal solidarity in the Legislature. "It will be a case of 'Eyes Front' constantly," he wrote to a friend.[140] With the election contest out of the way, the Premier could turn his attention to other matters: court action against his former business partner, and preparations for the first session of the Legislature.[141] At the libel trial, which took place in Regina early in March 1906, the owner of the Regina *Standard* was shown to have falsely accused Scott of attempted bribery, and a verdict of guilty was returned.[142] The whole matter had been a "constant nightmare" for Scott since December,[143] but now his reputation was cleared.

In the meantime Provincial Rights supporters had met in

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[140] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. Hawkes, 10 January 1906, p. 38090.

[141] *Ibid.*, Scott to T. M. Bryce, 20 December 1905, p. 37979; Scott to T. H. Garry, 2 January 1906, p. 38053.

[142] *Leader*, 2-5 March 1906.

[143] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to H. M. Howell, 8 March 1906, p. 46567.

Moose Jaw to erect a permanent party organization and prepare for the coming session of the Legislature. The delegates approved a resolution committing the party to "... adopt all constitutional methods to obtain our full autonomous rights as guaranteed by the constitution with the object of nationalizing our school system" and other resolutions favouring provincial control of lands and resources, public control of railways and other public utilities, and construction of the Hudson Bay railway. The convention also vigorously condemned the election scandal in Prince Albert County which had recently come to public attention.[144]

The first session of the first Legislature of Saskatchewan was opened on 29 March 1906 by Lieutenant-Governor Forget with all the ceremony befitting such an historic occasion. The newly-elected members gathered in the chamber formerly occupied by their Territorial counterparts to choose a Speaker, Thomas MacNutt of Saltcoats, and to hear the Lieutenant-Governor, in the time-honoured tradition of British parliamentary democracy, read the Speech from the Throne.[145] The choice of MacNutt as Speaker was almost dictated by the fact that he was the only government M.L.A., apart from Scott and Lamont, who possessed any previous legislative experience. Three members of the Opposition, F. W. G. Haultain, A. B. Gillis and Dr. W. Elliott had, like MacNutt, served also in the Territorial Assembly, and three Liberals and one Provincial Rights supporter boasted previous experience in municipal government.[146]

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[144] *Standard*, 24 January 1906.

[145] Saskatchewan, *Journals of the Legislative Assembly* [hereafter cited as *Journals*], 1906 (Regina: Government Printer, 1906), pp. 9-12.

Whatever their lack of legislative expertise, the members were, taken as a whole, men of ability. They possessed a relatively high level of education, as the presence of five lawyers and four medical doctors would attest. Farmers and ranchers composed the largest single group ~~in~~ the Legislature, and they could be expected to give close attention to matters affecting the agricultural development of the province. So also would those town and city merchants whose business interests were closely tied to the rural community. W. M. Grant, for example, was a farm implement agent; J. H. Wellington, a coal dealer; S. J. Donaldson, a livery stable operator and J. F. Bole, a general merchant. Only one M.L.A., Gerhard Ens of Rosthern, was not a native of eastern Canada or Great Britain, and only two, Ens and Albert Champagne of Battleford, were not Anglicans, Presbyterians or Methodists.[147] These were the men who would debate, and to a large degree determine, the future course of Saskatchewan's development.

The general feeling of optimism and confidence that had been so much in evidence at the time of the inauguration of the new province also found expression in the Throne Speech. The future was full of promise, it declared, "... an era of general prosperity has been entered upon, the limits of which can hardly be estimated." Lieutenant-Governor Forget made passing reference to the brilliant festivities which had marked the birth of the province, the progress of construction of the new transcontinental railways, and that "continued and rapid settlement" in which Saskatchewan fully expected to benefit and forecast a heavy legislative programme for the session.[148] If the Throne Speech looked to the future, the M.L.A.'s remained preoccupied with the past. The bitterness of the recent election contest had not entirely disappeared, and the first few days of the session were devoted largely to a discussion of the issues of that campaign. The Liberals criticized Haultain for his improper use of Archbishop Langevin's instructions to Roman Catholics, and the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues attacked the government for permitting the election scandal to occur in Prince Albert County.[149] A Provincial Rights amendment to the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne deploring the fact that Saskatchewan had not been granted equal status with the other provinces was easily defeated by a straight party vote on 9 April. This seemed to bring an end to the partisan wrangling, for the

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[146] Albert Champagne had served as mayor of Battleford, and S. J. Donaldson as mayor of Prince Albert; J. F. Bole and W. C. Sutherland as aldermen in Regina and Saskatoon respectively. *(C.P.G.*, 1908, pp. 437-44.)

[147] *Ibid.*

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[148] *Journals*, 1906, pp. 10-12.

[149] *Leader*, 4-14 April 1906.

Address passed by a unanimous vote next day.[150]

The session proved to be a busy one, as the members proceeded to lay the administrative foundations of the new province. Bills respecting the Legislative Assembly, the public service and the departments of government; the appointment of coroners, magistrates and other public officials; and the regulation of professional societies and the sale and transfer of land were introduced and passed with little or no discussion. The Legislature also took steps to assist the agricultural development of the province, by continuing the policy of providing financial assistance to creameries which the federal government had inaugurated during the Territorial period, and by offering increased grants to agricultural societies.[151] Nor was the need for improved transportation facilities forgotten. A general railway act was introduced and passed which required that thirty miles of line be constructed within two years of the granting of a provincial charter, with the balance to be completed within five years.[152] Five lines were incorporated during the session, and, in what would become almost an annual ritual, the House approved a resolution declaring that the completion of a railway to Hudson Bay was an urgent necessity.[153]

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[150] *Journals*, 1906, pp. 21-22. Premier Scott was anxious to put to rest the doubts which had been raised by his opponents during the recent election campaign as to the constitutionality of the acts which had created the new provinces. (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to W. Laurier, 29 December 1905, p. 50423.) Late in 1905 he had suggested to his Alberta counterpart, Alexander Rutherford, that the two provinces ask the federal government to submit the legislation to the courts for an opinion as to its constitutionality. Rutherford showed no real enthusiasm for the idea, and Laurier too doubted the wisdom of opening the question again. (*Ibid.*, Scott to A. C. Rutherford, 29 December 1905, p. 50424; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, A. C. Rutherford to Laurier, 10 January 1906, pp. 105855-56; Laurier to A. C. Rutherford, 16 January 1906, p. 105857.) Undaunted, Scott arranged for a resolution to be placed before the Legislature on 22 May 1906 requesting that steps be taken to submit the Saskatchewan Act to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. It was carried on a straight party vote. Haultain and his supporters objected that the resolution had been introduced for partisan purposes and refused to support it. (*Journals*, 1906, pp. 86-89; PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, F. W. G. Haultain to Willison, 5 August 1906, p. 14808.) As Scott had doubtless anticipated, the federal government took no action, and nothing more was heard of the question.

The selection of a permanent capital excited the liveliest interest among the members during this first session. Regina seemed in 1905 to be the logical choice, for it had been the capital of the North-West Territories since 1883, and was the largest city in the eastern portion of the Territories. Political considerations, and the ambition and enterprise of the rival communities of Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert, made a decision in favour of Regina less certain by the time the Legislature moved to consider the matter in the spring of 1906.

It became apparent as soon as Regina was named the provisional capital that there would be stiff competition for the permanent seat of government, particularly from the bustling town of Saskatoon.[154] The contest for this prize was soon overshadowed by the 1905 election, and during the campaign little was heard of the "capital question" except in Saskatoon, where the Liberal candidate was pledged to secure the honour for his home town.[155] The result of the election, with the north almost solidly Liberal, and the south evenly divided, seemed to suggest that the Scott government might favour a northern city for the capital, particularly as it first appeared that the Regina seat had gone to the Opposition. Even the Premier, himself a Regina man, was forced to admit that "by giving an adverse majority they have put the Government in a mighty precarious position on this question."[156] The final count gave the seat to the Liberal candidate by a majority of three votes, and Regina citizens began a determined campaign to keep the capital. The Regina city council offered a free site, and the residents of Saskatoon, which by now was seeking incorporation as a city, redoubled their efforts. The members of the Legislature were wooed at lavish banquets tendered by the Regina and Saskatoon Boards of Trade and were invited to inspect the advantages of Moose Jaw,

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[151] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Edw. VII, Chapters 38-39.

[152] *Ibid.*, Chapter 30. The act also permitted the government to acquire any railway operating under a provincial charter.

[153] *Journals*, 1906, pp. 41-42.

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[154] J. E. Murray, "The Provincial Capital Controversy in Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. V, No. 3 (Autumn, 1952), pp. 82-83, 87-91.

[155] *Saskatoon Phenix*, 6 October 1905, 12 December 1905.

[156] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. B. Cochrane, 20 December 1905, p. 37981.

Saskatoon, and Prince Albert at first hand.[157]

The climax came on 23 May when W. C. Sutherland, the M.L.A. for Saskatoon, introduced a resolution in the Legislature naming that city as the permanent capital. J. F. Bole championed the cause of Regina, arguing that it had been the capital for many years and that it had developed certain vested interests which required that the capital remain there. Premier Scott supported Bole's contention and declared that the government would not remove the capital from Regina. The Leader of the Opposition, Haultain, announced that he too favoured the present arrangement, and the motion introduced by the member for Saskatoon was defeated.[158] The decision of the government was received with general satisfaction in the south and, with some reluctance, in the north.[159] The site of the provincial university remained to be chosen, and this undoubtedly gave hope to Saskatoon, Prince Albert and other communities that their claims would receive more favourable consideration another time.

The first session of the first Saskatchewan Legislature ended on 26 May 1906. It had been a productive session: more than sixty bills were passed into law, Regina was selected as the permanent capital, and the basis was laid for the future development of the province. The session was also important in another sense, for it marked the end of the period of political turmoil which had accompanied the creation of the province in 1905. The bitter racial and religious divisions raised by the controversy over separate schools began to heal, though they would never disappear entirely, and for a few years Saskatchewan residents lived and worked together in comparative harmony. In an era of boundless prosperity, the attention of the people of the province and their Legislature turned to matters of more immediate practical concern.

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[157] Murray, pp. 92-99.

[158] *Journals*, 1906, pp. 90-91; *Leader*, 24 May 1906.

[159] Murray, pp. 104-105.

CHAPTER II

"THE BANNER PROVINCE OF CANADA," 1906-1911

Walter Scott and the Liberals could hardly have come into office under more favourable circumstances. The signs of progress and prosperity were everywhere, and it seemed only a matter of time before Saskatchewan would, as the Premier had so confidently predicted, become "the banner province of Canada." While Scott and Haultain were making the rounds of election meetings in the fall and winter of 1905, Saskatchewan farmers were harvesting a record wheat crop of more than 26,000,000 bushels. The average yield, 23 bushels per acre, was the best since 1901.[1] Drawn by the prospects of profitable grain farming, settlers were pouring into the province in ever increasing numbers. The number of immigrants giving Saskatchewan as their intended destination increased from 28,728 in 1906 to 30,590 in 1908 and 40,763 in 1911 and still showed no signs of diminishing. There were 27,038 homestead entries recorded in the province in 1906, and the figures for subsequent years kept pace with the flood of newcomers entering the province.[2]

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[1] Saskatchewan, Department of Agriculture, *Annual Report* [hereafter cited as *Agriculture Report*], 1905 (Regina: Government Printer, 1907), pp. 7, 11.

[2] *Ibid.*, 1916, pp. 139-40.

The construction of two new transcontinental railways across the prairies opened much of central and northern Saskatchewan to large scale settlement, and offered work and wages to homesteaders, thereby providing them with a ready source of cash to begin farming operations. In 1905 the main line of the Canadian Northern was extended from Kamsack through Humboldt, North Battleford, Lloydminster and on to Edmonton. Work on the prairie section of the Grand Trunk Pacific began at Portage la Prairie during the same year, and by the end of 1907 the line was completed nearly to Saskatoon and by 1909 to Edmonton.[3] The short-grass plains between Moose Jaw and Calgary were thrown open for homesteading in 1909, and the last and driest portion of the southern prairies was soon filling up with settlers.[4]

In the wake of this feverish pace of railway building and settlement came the "instant towns," such as North Battleford, which was but empty prairie until the Canadian Northern line reached the north bank of the North Saskatchewan River, across from Battleford, in May 1905. Within a few months the new townsite boasted a railway depot, a three-story hotel, a post office, branches of the Imperial Bank of Canada and Bank of Commerce, dry goods, hardware and other retail stores and Methodist and Anglican churches. Two doctors and a dentist had arrived, and another newcomer advertised "a complete stock of coffins, caskets, shrouds, etc. furnished on shortest notice" in the local newspaper. The residents organized a public school district in October 1905 and secured the incorporation of North Battleford as a village the following March. Four months later the village became a town, and by 1911 the population of this divisional point on the Canadian Northern main line had risen to 2,105.[5] In similar fashion dozens of other small towns across the province became prosperous trading centres serving the adjacent farming community. Wheat and railways were the dominant influences in the growth of the larger urban centres as well. The convergence of railway lines through Saskatoon made the "Hub City" one of the busiest in the west.[6] Farm implement and other companies built large warehouses in Regina and Saskatoon to serve their rural customers, and these two cities became the most important distribution centres in the province.[7]

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[3] G. R. Stevens, *Canadian National Railways*, Vol. II: *Towards the Inevitable, 1896-1922* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company, 1962), pp. 48-52, 176-79.

[4] V. C. Fowke, *The National Policy and the Wheat Economy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), pp. 73, 77.

For every newcomer who settled in a village, town or city in Saskatchewan between 1906 and 1911, two settled on the land,[8] and agriculture long remained the mainstay of the province's economy. Wheat acreage more than doubled between 1906 and 1908, and nearly doubled again in the next three years.[9] During the same period total wheat production increased from 37,040,098 to 96,796,588 bushels.[10] The grain growers not only dominated the economy of Saskatchewan, they also dominated its politics. No party could hope to secure power at Regina, or long remain in office, without the support of rural voters, and programmes of assistance to agriculture were given a place of prominence in the platforms which the Liberal and Provincial Rights parties presented to the electorate in 1905. Premier Scott attempted to cultivate this support by choosing a well-known farmer and president of the Territorial Grain Growers' Association[11] as Commissioner of Agriculture. The Liberals carried on the voluntary hail insurance scheme instituted by their predecessors in 1902,[12] and took over

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[5] A. McPherson, *The Battlefords: A History* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1967), pp. 138-57.

[6] J. H. Archer, "The History of Saskatoon to 1914" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1948), p. 115.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 163; Drake, pp. 111-12, 118-19.

[8] The rural population of Saskatchewan increased from 209,301 to 361,067 between 1906 and 1911; the urban population from 48,462 to 131,365 during the same period. (*Census of ... the Northwest Provinces, 1906*, p. 101; Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics,

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Fifth Census of Canada, 1911, Vol. I [Ottawa: King's Printer, 1912], p. 530.)

[9] *Wheat Acreage in Saskatchewan, 1906-1911.*

1906	1,730,586	(acres)
1907	2,047,724	
1908	3,703,563	
1909	4,085,000	
1910	4,664,834	
1911	5,232,248	

(Source: *Agriculture Report*, 1911, p. 46.)

[10] *Ibid.*

[11] The name of the farmers' organization was changed to Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association in 1906.

[12] Hingley, pp. 3-5.

from the federal authorities the programme of assistance to creameries which had been inaugurated in 1897.[13] Elected at a time of buoyant optimism and rapid economic growth, the new government of Premier Walter Scott faced the comparatively simple task of accommodating its administration and legislation to the wishes of the organized farmers.

The rapid growth of the province brought with it a demand for those facilities which any settled civilized community took for granted at the turn of the century. One of these was the telephone. The Bell Telephone Company was operating in the west as early as the 1880's, but it was slow to provide long distance service, even between major centres. Not until 1905 did the Company erect the first long distance line out of Regina, north to Lumsden, less than twenty miles away, and it was another year before the city was connected with Winnipeg and eastern Canada.[14] Rural service was almost nonexistent. The western farmer attached great importance to the telephone, as a means of communication with his market town, and as a means of overcoming the sense of isolation which was so much a part of life on the sparsely settled prairies, but "private enterprise in the telephone industry, accustomed to the demands chiefly of industrial areas, proved inadequate to the demands of a rural area requiring immediate expansion."[15] The Bell Company frankly acknowledged that rural service was not a profitable field for investment and in Saskatchewan, where the population was predominantly rural, this meant little hope of development by private enterprise.[16]

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[13] The federal government had made loans to joint stock companies or creamery associations to enable them to establish creameries in the North-West Territories. The government managed all creameries so assisted, and manufactured and marketed the butter. In 1906, when the work was taken over by the province, there were four government-operated creameries in Saskatchewan. (G. C. Church, "Dominion Government Aid to the Dairy Industry in Western Canada, 1890-1906," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XVI, No. 2 (Spring, 1963), pp. 55-58.

[14] Drake, p. 118.

There was in Canada at this time considerable popular support for the municipal ownership of all public utilities, and when Parliament appointed a Select Committee in 1905 to investigate the telephone industry, public ownership was advanced as one solution to the problem of monopoly control by the Bell Company.[17] Western men followed the hearings of the Select Committee with considerable interest. The Associated Boards of Trade of the North-West Territories, meeting in annual convention in Regina, declared by resolution that government ownership and operation of telephones was in the public interest. Businessmen realized the commercial importance of the telephone and believed that public ownership would provide better and cheaper service.[18] The Alberta and Manitoba governments acceded to the demand for public ownership of telephones in 1906.[19] In Saskatchewan, on the other hand, the matter received little public attention during the year. The Liberal and Provincial Rights conventions of 1905 had declared in favour of public ownership or control of public utilities, but the members of the Legislature did not discuss the telephone question at all during the first session.

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[15] H. A. Innis, *Problems of Staple Production in Canada* Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1933), p. 67.

[16] D. S. Spafford, "Telephone Service in Saskatchewan: A Study in Public Policy" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1961), p. 2.

[17] P. Rutherford, "Tomorrow's Metropolis: The Urban Reform Movement in Canada, 1880-1920," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers, 1971,* pp. 207-208; G. E. Britnell, "Public Ownership of Telephones in the Prairie Provinces" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Toronto, 1934), pp. 8-21.

In January 1907 the Regina Branch of the S.G.G.A. passed a resolution favouring government ownership and operation of a provincial telephone system, and the farmers' organization approved a similar resolution at its annual convention the following month.[20] On the eve of the opening of the second session of the Legislature F. W. G. Haultain declared that he approved of the action taken by the Alberta and Manitoba governments on the telephone question. A cheap telephone service would be of great benefit to the farmers of Saskatchewan, and to urban residents as well. It was so urgent a matter that he hoped the government would introduce constructive legislation during the coming session.[21]

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[18] *Standard,* 3 July 1905.

[19] L. G. Thomas, p. 41; W. L. Morton, *Manitoba,* p. 289.

[20] *Leader,* 21 January 1907; AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Annual Convention Reports, 1904-1914* [hereafter cited as *Convention Reports*] (Regina: Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, Limited, n.d.), 1907, pp. 60-61.

[21] *Standard,* 18 February 1907.

The Legislature began to work on 21 February 1907. Premier Scott was absent from the province on account of ill health and J. H. Lamont led the Liberal forces in the House.[22] The session was a busy one. The Attorney-General introduced legislation creating a new Supreme Court and a system of District Courts for the province, and J. A. Calder introduced two bills establishing a system of high schools and a provincial university and agricultural college.[23] The University Act was a remarkable piece of legislation. It created a single strong state institution with exclusive degree-granting powers and made the university entirely free from political influence and control. At Haultain's suggestion the draft bill was amended to provide that the Senate, a popularly chosen body, appoint five, and the government only three, of the nine members of the Board of Governors. The University of Saskatchewan was to be open to men and women alike, and no religious test was to be required of teachers or students. The act entrusted the responsibility for appointing, promoting and dismissing the teaching staff to the President, without interference by the Board of Governors.[24]

To finance these new educational institutions and the expanding system of country schools, Calder introduced another measure, the Supplementary Revenue Act. It levied a tax of one cent per acre on all occupied land in the province outside of organized village or town school districts, the receipts from which were to be distributed in various proportions to the university and agricultural college (5 per cent each), secondary schools (10 per cent), and primary schools (80 per cent).[25] In this way the costs of education would be equalized over the whole province, and not borne only by taxpayers in the organized school districts. The Leader of the Opposition endorsed the principle of a general tax on all land in the province, but objected that the proposed legislation discriminated against the rural districts, which would be taxed to support the high schools and the university while the towns and cities were exempt. D. J. Wylie, the Provincial Rights M.L.A. for Maple Creek and a rancher himself, also claimed that the imposition of the tax on leased grazing lands would place an unfair burden on the ranching industry. This argument did not receive much sympathy from the farmer members of the House, and the government refused to grant an exemption. Nearly every member of the government and Opposition took part in the debate on the bill, which passed easily on a straight party vote.[26]

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[22] *Leader,* 21 February 1907. Scott had contracted pneumonia earlier in the winter and was absent from the province on his doctor's orders.

[23] Saskatchewan, *Statutes,* 7 Edw. VII, Chapters 8-9, 24-25.

[24] A. S. Morton, *Saskatchewan: The Making of a University* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), pp. 12-17.

The telephone question was not mentioned in the Speech from the Throne. During the debate which followed, though, W. C.

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[25] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 7 Edw. VII, Chapter 3.

[26] *Leader*, 1 March 1907, 16 March 1907, 27 March 1907; *Journals*, 1907, pp. 65-66.

Sutherland commented that the testimony presented to the Select Committee in Ottawa two years before demonstrated that it was not in the public interest to allow a large corporation to secure a monopoly and hinted that government action was forthcoming.[27] When the estimates were brought down a vote of $6,000 was included to provide for an inquiry into the matter. The next day Haultain introduced a resolution declaring "that the early establishment of a system of telephones owned and operated by the Province is desirable." The experience of other provinces showed that public ownership and operation was both possible and feasible, and particularly so in a province like Saskatchewan, which was not hampered by vested rights. There was a reaction everywhere against monopolies, he said, and "one of the most grasping and tyrannical monopolies" in Canada was that of the Bell Telephone Company. The province should control the telephone system for the benefit of its citizens and protect them against this monopolistic company.

In replying for the government J. H. Lamont indicated that, prior to his illness, the Premier had given special attention to the telephone question, compiling facts and figures and reading the testimony presented to the parliamentary committee, with a view to outlining the government's policy to the House. Public ownership and operation of telephones would involve the expenditure of a large sum of money, and before such a policy was presented to the House the government wished to have complete information on the subject. George Langley, a Liberal back-bencher, declared that he fully approved of the principle of government ownership of public utilities, but wished to see a full inquiry made before the government embarked on such a scheme. He moved an amendment to this effect, which was agreed to by both sides of the House.[28]

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[27] *Leader*, 26 February 1907.

The government now appeared committed to public ownership of telephones, but it did not allow its hands to be tied so easily. The Liberals henceforth took the position that the resolution was no more than an expression of opinion by the Legislature on the abstract principle of public ownership. The telephone inquiry, which Calder explained would be conducted by some "thoroughly practical man,"[29] would determine the feasibility of public ownership for Saskatchewan. When Premier Scott announced the appointment of the telephone expert in August, he was careful to avoid any explicit reference to the resolution which the Legislature had passed in favour of public ownership. Some method had to be found to bring telephone service to the farmers of the province, he declared, and the government had "an absolutely open mind on the whole question of ways and means to that end ...."[30]

Francis Dagger, a telephone expert who possessed some thirty years' experience in Great Britain and the United States, and who had recently been employed by the Manitoba government to assist in the formulation of its telephone policy, was engaged for a period of three months to perform a similar task for Saskatchewan.[31] The choice of Dagger was hardly an accident. Premier Scott had consulted William Mulock, the chairman of the 1905 parliamentary committee, and the latter had recommended Dagger for the work.[32] Nor was Scott unfamiliar with this expert's views, for Dagger had appeared before that committee and criticized the Bell Telephone Company for its overcapitalization, excessive urban and long distance rates, and inattention to small communities and rural areas. The only solution, he believed, was government ownership of long distance lines and government control of local systems.[33]

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[28] *Ibid.*, 27 March 1907; *Journals*, 1907, p. 64.

[29] *Leader*, 4 April 1907.

[30] *Ibid.*, 6 August 1907.

Dagger reiterated his views in an address to the convention of the Union of Saskatchewan Municipalities shortly after his appointment. He told the delegates that he favoured government ownership and operation of long distance lines to prevent a private monopoly, such as the Bell Company had secured elsewhere, and municipal ownership of local telephone systems. Every community in Saskatchewan should be connected by long distance lines and every farmer should be able to enjoy telephone service at reasonable rates, but no government could provide a telephone service of this kind, he warned, unless it was self-supporting. His task was to determine the practicability of such a scheme, and he hoped that with the farmers' co-operation Saskatchewan might be a pioneer in providing telephone service to a sparsely settled area. At the conclusion of his remarks the convention passed a resolution objecting to the excessive rates charged by the Bell Company and supporting government ownership of telephones for Saskatchewan.[34] The telephone expert at once commenced his investigation for the government, and he remained in the province for the next few months. In December the work was transferred to the Department of Railways, which began to draw up a definite construction programme on the understanding that the government planned to bring down the necessary legislation at the next session.[35]

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[31] Spafford, p. 9.

[32] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to W. J. Maier, 9 July 1907, p. 59163.

[33] Britnell, pp. 13-14.

The Liberals originally planned to begin the session in November 1907, but the Legislature did not begin its work until April of the following year. The delay was caused in part by a disputed by-election in Prince Albert, which had been made necessary by the resignation of J. H. Lamont to accept an appointment to the new Supreme Court of the province. W. F. A. Turgeon, a Prince Albert lawyer and partner of the former Attorney-General, was chosen to fill the vacancy in the cabinet.[36] The son of a New Brunswick Member of Parliament, this young French Canadian had been schooled in politics, and it was not surprising that he early attracted the Premier's attention. Scott was impressed with Turgeon's work for the Liberal party in the first provincial election, and had other considerations not intervened, it is likely that the young lawyer would have succeeded Lamont as the federal member for Prince Albert in 1906.[37] The new Attorney-General possessed great ability, and his appointment assured French Canadians and Roman Catholics in the province of a sympathetic consideration of their views.

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[34] *Leader,* 7 August 1907.

[35] *Ibid.,* 3 December 1907, 18 December 1907.

The by-election took place on 12 October 1907, and while Turgeon was declared elected, his Provincial Rights opponent disputed a number of the ballots. The Territorial election law, which was still in force in Saskatchewan, permitted Turgeon to take his seat in the House, but the cabinet decided to postpone the opening of the session until the matter was resolved by the courts. Such a delay would also permit the Premier to leave the province during the coldest months of the winter, when the danger to his health, not yet fully restored, was most acute.[38] Walter Scott and his family spent the winter in Europe and returned to Regina late in March. He was fit and rested, he announced, and fully prepared for the work ahead.[39]

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[36] *Ibid.*, 18 September 1907, 24 September 1907.

[37] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to O. Turgeon, 9 January 1906, p. 37424. Scott and other Liberals were concerned that the nomination of another Prince Albert man might injure the party's chances in other sections of the riding. For a more complete study of W. F. A. Turgeon and his rise to political prominence in Saskatchewan see P. Morissette, "La Carriere Politique de W. F. A. Turgeon, 1907-1921" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Regina, 1975).

The Speech from the Throne opening the session on 2 April indicated that the government planned to introduce a number of important measures, including telephone legislation of course, and also a new election act, and bills to increase the membership of the Legislative Assembly and to provide for the free distribution of school readers.[40] Premier Scott tabled the report which Francis Dagger had prepared for the government on 3 April, and it was published in the Regina *Leader* the next day.

The report showed that telephone service in the province was far from satisfactory. Only 22 of the 121 cities, towns and villages in Saskatchewan were supplied with telephone service, and there were no more than 300 rural telephones. The Bell Telephone Company and the Saskatchewan Telephone Company had built 420 miles of long distance line linking Regina, Moose Jaw and other communities in the southern part of the province, but north of

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[38] *C.A.R.*, 1907, p. 587; *Leader*, 19 November 1907.

[39] *Leader*, 27 March 1908.

[40] *Journals*, 1908, pp. 7-9. Earlier in the year the Scott government had signed a ten-year agreement to purchase a series of school readers from the Morang Company of Toronto. (*Leader*, 15 January 1908.) The legislation aurthorized school boards to purchase any or all of the books for distribution free of cost to their pupils. (Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8 Edw. VII, Chapter 19.)

Lumsden there was no long distance service of any kind. Dagger recommended that the provincial government own and operate all long distance lines in Saskatchewan to avoid any possibility of a private monopoly, and leave the provision of local telephone service to the municipalities. "... I do not see," he commented, "why the government should be called upon to provide local telephone service any more than it should to furnish water, electric light, street railways or any other utility for the almost exclusive service of the dwellers in each locality."[41] These recommendations might have been expected, considering the views which Dagger had expressed in his speech to the Union of Saskatchewan Municipalities and in subsequent newspaper interviews.[42]

Dagger then went on to suggest how telephone service might be provided in rural areas where, he believed, the telephone was as important as railways or good roads. He recommended that the provincial government assist rural municipalities or local co-operative companies to provide telephone service. As an example of what might be accomplished by such a programme, he pointed to the situation in Iowa, where 2,500 mutual or co-operative associations provided telephone service to more than 160,000 rural subscribers. Dagger suggested that the government build lines in three or four districts as pilot projects, and on the basis of this experience draft legislation "... for the development of an efficient farm telephone service at the lowest cost, either by the rural municipalities, local companies or mutual associations" and provide expert advice, equipment and assistance in financing.[43]

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[41] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1908, No. 1, *Report of Mr. Francis Dagger, employed as Provincial Telephone Expert, with respect to the development of the Telephone Service in the Province of Saskatchewan*, pp. 5-11.

[42] See, for example, *Leader*, 18 December 1907.

The government readily accepted most of the recommendations contained in Dagger's report. As J. F. Bole told the House, the government would be justified in taking over the long distance lines even as an experiment. The system was in its infancy, and unlike the railroads, for example, the private telephone companies had not kept pace with the development of the province. Speaking for businessmen like himself, Bole wished to see cheap and rapid telephone service extended to all parts of Saskatchewan.[44]

It was the question of rural service which caused Liberals the greatest concern. Premier Scott candidly admitted that if his government could not "hold out hope of telephone service to the farmers it had better keep clear of the matter entirely." On the other hand, he believed it would be "simply suicidal" from a financial standpoint for the government to provide telephone service in the sparsely settled rural areas of the province. What was needed was a plan of encouragement which would bring practical results "while still leaving enough responsibility on the country people themselves to keep the government free from the danger of being swamped."[45]

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[43] *Report of Mr. Francis Dagger*, pp. 11-15.

[44] *Leader*, 7 April 1908.

J. A. Calder presented the government's legislation to the House in the form of three bills. The Railway and Telephone Department Act created a department of government with power to construct telephone lines anywhere in the province, to purchase existing lines, to establish standard construction and operating specifications for all telephone systems so as to ensure uniformity and to control the rates charged by private telephone companies. The Municipal Telephone Act permitted any urban or rural municipality to operate its own telephone system and issue debentures as a means of raising the necessary capital. The Rural Telephone Act provided that five or more persons might organize a rural joint-stock company to construct and operate a telephone system for their common benefit. The government would provide free poles and technical assistance, and would have control of rates and service on all lines so assisted.[46]

The government was prepared to construct more than 2,000 miles of long distance lines in the next few years, Calder declared during debate on the legislation. The first priority would be to link the southern portion of the province with the northern, which, as Dagger had shown in his report, did not yet have long distance service. The Minister also explained at some length why the government had decided to adopt the policy of assistance to mutual telephone companies as outlined in the Rural Telephone Act. There was no doubt of the great demand for telephone service in rural areas, particularly in areas settled by farmers from Ontario or the United States who found it a great hardship to be deprived of what they regarded as a necessity. Yet the private companies operating in Saskatchewan had made no attempt to provide such service because it was not profitable. Furthermore, not a single expert could be found in Canada or the United States who was in favour of government operation of rural telephones. The plan which the government had decided upon was the best plan, Calder believed, for it would encourage local enterprise and enable farmers to secure telephone service quickly and inexpensively. Initial labour costs and costs of maintenance and operation would be lower for these small mutual companies than for a large government system embracing the whole province.[47]

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[45] PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, W. Scott to Sifton, 15 April 1908, p. 149643.

[46] *Leader*, 30 April 1908.

Haultain, and his Provincial Rights colleagues A. B. Gillis and D. D. Ellis, were critical of the proposed legislation,[48] and particularly of the rural telephone scheme. Haultain declared that there was no need for a long distance system for 75 or 80 per cent of the rural population. The greatest demand for telephone service, as Calder himself had admitted, was in the rural areas, and it was rural service which the House had had especially in mind when it endorsed the principle of public ownership in 1907. The government had now departed from this principle, and farmers would have to depend upon the resources of private individuals or rural municipalities for telephone service. To argue, as Calder had done, that rural mutual companies could provide a telephone service more economically than the provincial government was to deny the reality of current business practice. Small enterprises were continually combining to form large trusts. Modern department stores were a perfect illustration of how one large business could operate more efficiently than a number of separate hardware, grocery and other stores under individual management.[49]

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[47] *Ibid.*, 6 May 1908.

[48] *Ibid.*, 30 April 1908, 2 May 1908.

Other Liberal members defended the rural telephone legislation as a practical measure which would provide telephone service to farmers who were willing to help themselves. George Langley claimed that a government-operated rural telephone service might strain the finances of the province to the breaking point. He also pointed out that under the government's legislation there would be no dispute between one section of the province and another as to which should be served first.[50] It was an intriguing argument, one which suggests that if the rural telephone bill had nothing else to commend it, it would at least protect the Liberals from having to make politically unpopular decisions. Liberals also argued that the government had relied on the advice of telephone experts, and on the experience of other provinces and states in adopting the policy of assistance to rural mutual companies.[51]

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[49] *Ibid.*, 6 May 1908, 19 May 1908.

[50] *Ibid.*, 6 May 1908.

The Liberals also attempted to answer Haultain's contention that the proposed legislation was inconsistent with the resolution which the House had agreed to the year before. The members had originally been asked to vote on the abstract principle of government ownership and operation of telephones but, it was claimed, this resolution had been amended to require the government to investigate the practicability of such a scheme, and this the government had done. Opposition M.L.A.'s were not convinced by this argument, and on third reading of the rural telephone bill Haultain moved an amendment expressing regret that the government had not applied the principle of public ownership to the rural areas where the greatest need existed. The amendment was of course defeated by the Liberals and the telephone legislation was approved.[52]

The question of public ownership also appeared in another form during the session, when members on both sides of the House debated the merits of a government-operated elevator system which was then being demanded by the S.G.G.A. and other western farm organizations. Having obtained a measure of relief in the Manitoba Grain Act of 1900 and its subsequent amendments, western farmers now sought to participate directly in the grain business. In a number of communities farmers joined together to construct and operate a local elevator. These ventures were often handicapped by poor management and insufficient patronage by farmers, and always by the much greater competitive strength of the line elevator companies which not only stored but bought and sold grain as well.[53] Farmers achieved more success in another business enterprise, the Grain Growers' Grain Company, a co-operatively owned grain agency organized in 1906 to receive grain from members and sell it directly on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange.[54]

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[51] *Ibid.*, 6 May 1908, 19 May 1908.

[52] *Ibid.*, 19 May 1908; *Journals*, 1908, pp. 59-60.

By this time pressure was also mounting for outright government ownership and operation of all grain handling facilities. Abuses were bound to persist, it was argued, as long as elevators continued to perform the dual function of buying and selling grain on their own account as well as handling farmers' stored grain, and as long as the ownership of such a large proportion of initial storage and terminal capacity was concentrated in a few companies. If an elevator monopoly were inevitable, as it seemed to be, then a public monopoly would be preferable to a private one. The leading exponent of government ownership was E. A. Partridge, a visionary farmer from Sintaluta. The elevator system, he and his supporters contended, was essentially a public utility, it was of vital importance, and the waste and inefficiency of competition were readily apparent. The three prairie governments ought to own and operate all the elevators at initial shipping points within their respective provinces and the federal government likewise ought to own and operate all terminal facilities.[55] This was the "Partridge Plan." If it was supported by any considerable proportion of their rural electorates, then it could hardly be ignored by Premier Scott and his Manitoba and Alberta colleagues.

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[53] Fowke, pp. 127-36.

[54] Patton, pp. 43-49.

The Grain Growers' conventions in the three provinces endorsed the Partridge Plan in 1907 and 1908 and agreed to approach their respective governments for a declaration in favour of the scheme. The Manitoba association was the first to do so, but Premier Roblin refused to make a definite commitment. It was a matter for joint action by the three governments, he told them, and he wished to consult with Premier Scott and Premier Rutherford of Alberta before giving an answer.[56]

This was the situation when D. D. Ellis moved on 8 April that the government conduct a thorough investigation of the question of public ownership of elevators and present a report to the Legislature at the next session. The question affected the most important industry in the province, he declared, and the government might even build and operate elevators at a few points for experimental purposes. George Langley, who had recently been elected to the executive of the S.G.G.A., indicated to the House that the farmers' organization had not yet conferred with the government, and urged that their opinion be heard before definite action was taken. Other Liberals argued too that it would be an act of discourtesy for the Legislature to express an opinion before the best information was placed before them and, on a party division, the motion asking for an inquiry was defeated.[57] The executive of the S.G.G.A. met with the government a week later, and Premier Scott promised to give full consideration to their request for a government elevator scheme.[58]

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[55] *Ibid.*, pp. 79-81. The career of this remarkable farm leader is described in greater detail in R. Hedlin, "Edmund A. Partridge," Manitoba Historical and Scientific Society, *Papers*, Series III, No. 15 (1960), pp. 59-68.

[56] Patton, pp. 81-82; *Leader*, 20 February 1908.

Another matter of practical concern to the farming population of Saskatchewan also occupied the attention of the province's legislators in the spring of 1908. The almost insatiable demand for railway lines to every district of the province however remote was emphasized by what one newspaper termed a "revolt" of Liberal members against a railway taxation bill introduced by J. A. Calder. Several government backbenchers, and one or two Provincial Rights members, declared in the strongest terms that they feared such legislation would discourage the railway companies from completing branch and feeder lines desperately needed by settlers in new areas. The provision of more railway facilities would be an important question for many years to come, they argued, and the government ought to encourage the construction of new lines by bond guarantees, as Manitoba had done, or by some other method. In reply Premier Scott declared that the question of guaranteeing bonds was a matter requiring careful consideration and he declined to commit the government to a definite policy.[59] At least one Conservative newspaper did not believe that there had been any "revolt" of back-benchers at all. The Regina *Standard* regarded the affair as an attempt by the government to prepare the ground for the introduction of a programme of bond guarantees.[60] In the light of subsequent developments it seems clear that this was in fact the government's intention.

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[57] *Leader,* 9 April 1908; *Journals,* 1908, pp. 15-16.

[58] *Leader,* 16 April 1908.

The government had indicated at the beginning of the session that it intended to replace the Territorial election law and increase the size of the Legislative Assembly. These two measures not unnaturally received careful scrutiny from members on both sides of the House. Premier Scott announced that his government did not wish to delay the redistribution of seats until the last session, but hoped that by making the changes earlier the people would have more time to become accustomed to the new boundaries.[61] The work of preparing a detailed plan was entrusted to a committee of five:

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[59] *Ibid.*, 22 May 1908.

[60] *Standard*, 21 May 1908.

[61] *Leader*, 8 April 1908.

Scott, Gerhard Ens and J. A. Sheppard for the government, and Haultain and A. B. Gillis for the Opposition.[62] Premier Scott received many suggestions for proposed constituency boundaries and consulted with local party supporters as the work of the committee progressed.[63] The first plan presented by the Liberals would have left three Provincial Rights members all residents of one new riding, a proposition to which Haultain and especially Gillis, who was one of those so affected, could hardly agree. Various compromises were proposed, and the final plan was accepted unanimously.[64] The number of seats was increased from twenty-five to forty-one; of these sixteen were along or south of the C.P.R. main line, and twenty-five north of that railway.[65] The new election act substituted a printed ballot for the blank form used previously, and made provision for a closed voters' list, whereby only those persons whose names appeared on the list at election time would be permitted to vote.[66]

Prorogation of the Legislature came on 12 June 1908. The government commenced the preparation of the voters' lists[67] and both parties began the search for candidates for the sixteen new ridings in the province. The Provincial Rights party chose an American farmer, George Beischel, to contest Weyburn, and other nominations followed in short order.[68] At the end of June Premier Scott announced that the contract for the construction of the new Legislative Buildings in Regina had been awarded to the Montreal firm of P. Lyall and Sons.[69] Scott also wrote to the Prime Minister urging that the federal government "follow up its settlement policy with a systematic, well planned, aggressive railway policy ..." The Premier listed a number of projected lines in Saskatchewan which required immediate attention if the hardships of settlers in new areas located many miles from the nearest railway were to be alleviated.[70] Scott travelled to Ottawa later in the summer to press for more railway facilities, and reported upon his return to Regina that he was well satisfied with the results of his lobbying. The federal government had agreed to assist the construction of some of the more urgently required lines and provided assurances that a railway would be built to Hudson Bay.[71]

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[62] *Journals*, 1908, p. 51.

[63] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to A. B. Potter, 1 May 1908, p. 36641; L. Thomson to Scott, 27 May 1908, p. 36652; Scott to L. Thomson, 29 May 1908, p. 36656.

[64] *Ibid.*, Scott to A. B. Potter, 15 June 1908, pp. 36648-51.

[65] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8 Edw. VII, Chapter 4.

[66] *Ibid.*, Chapter 2.

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[67] *Leader*, 8 July 1908.

[68] *Standard*, 29 June 1908; *Leader*, 11 July 1908.

[69] *Leader*, 1 July 1908.

[70] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 19 June 1908, pp. 141741-44.

Armed with these promises, Scott dissolved the Legislature and called an election for 14 August 1908. His election manifesto reviewed the record of the government and promised a continuation of progressive and economical administration in the future. Scott drew particular attention to the sound financial position of the government, and to the telephone programme recently approved by the Legislature and pledged the Liberals to "a policy of rapid branch railway extension in portions of the Province where such extensions are required to give transportation facilities and competition ...."[72]

There seems little doubt that the Liberals caught their opponents by surprise. To be sure, the Provincial Rights party had already begun to nominate candidates in new constituencies, but this work was not very far advanced by the end of July. Haultain and his supporters undoubtedly anticipated that there would be another session before dissolution. Scott had said as much during the debate on the redistribution bill, and the preparation of voters' lists after the session suggested that an election would not be held for some time. Newspapers friendly to Haultain were outraged, and accused the Premier of deliberate trickery in calling a "snap" election with only three weeks' warning.[73]

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[71] *Leader*, 20 July 1908.

[72] *Ibid.*, 21 July 1908. The closed voters' list was not used in this election, since it had not been completed in time. Instead an enumerated list was prepared. Voters whose names were not included on this list were permitted to be sworn in on election day and vote.

Haultain repeated this accusation during the opening speech of his campaign in Regina and outlined the platform on which the Provincial Rights party would fight the election. In his opinion the issues of 1905 were not dead. The lands and resources of Saskatchewan were being squandered under federal administration, and already the compensation provided in lieu of provincial control had proved to be inadequate. The Scott government had resorted to direct taxation in the form of the Supplementary Revenue Act, which taxed the homesteader to pay for high schools and a university while children in country districts could not obtain a common school education. He accused the government of extravagance and mismanagement in connection with the school reader contract and the Legislative Buildings contract, and again criticized the Liberals for providing the luxury of a long distance telephone service while leaving the farmers to construct and pay for their own lines. The Provincial Rights party believed that the government should own and operate the entire telephone system, and should also investigate the practicability of public ownership of elevators.[74]

The lines of battle were drawn. As in 1905, the Liberals again possessed a distinct advantage in their superior organization and control of federal and provincial patronage. Scott and his colleagues recognized the value of carrying on organization work between elections, especially in the new areas of the province which the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific railways were opening for settlement.[75] It was important to establish contact with newcomers as soon as they arrived, Liberals believed:

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[73] *Standard,* 22 July 1908; *West* (Regina), 22 July 1908; *Prince Albert Times,* 22 July 1908; *Progress* (Qu'Appelle), 30 July 1908.

[74] *Standard,* 25 July 1908; *Leader,* 25 July 1908.

> These settlers come here to make a home rather than to enter into political life ... [but] this is the very class of the community to be looked after, because it is at this time that they are most easily moulded one way or the other. Anyone that can show them that the Liberal Party is the party whose interests are their interests will be doing good work in assisting to make the political complexion of the people of this province.[76]

With this F. W. G. Haultain agreed:

> I am quite confident that a very large number of the new settlers, especially those from the United States, will vote with us if we can only get at them.

The Provincial Rights party was handicapped in this work by insufficient funds, and by the opposition of "a host of [government] officials, Federal and Local, whose principal duty seems to be political organization."[77]

The Liberals used the distribution of patronage to win political support and to enhance the prestige of the local party organization. Appointments to government positions were generally made only after the local M.L.A., defeated candidate or constituency executive had been consulted.[78] To some extent, road work was planned in the same way.[79] Patronage lists were drawn up for the guidance of Department of Public Works and other government officials in purchasing supplies and even in securing hotel accommodation in communities throughout the province.[80]

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[75] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to H. C. McColl, 24 January 1906, p. 38105; N. D. MacDougall to Scott, 2 August 1907, p. 37172.

[76] AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to T. E. Stueck, 4 June 1908, p. 12686.

[77] PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, F. W. G. Haultain to Willison, 5 February 1908, pp. 14810-11.

Sympathetic press support was invaluable in an era when the newspaper was still the single most influential form of mass persuasion available to a political party. Most newspapers at this time, if not owned or controlled outright by politicians, were in the hands of publishers and editors who took their politics seriously, and zealously supported the Liberals or Conservatives.[81] Here too the Liberals enjoyed an important advantage, for they controlled government printing patronage. The chief beneficiary was the Regina *Leader*, which received more than $54,000 for government printing work between 1905 and 1908 alone.[82] The support of local newspapers throughout the province could be assured by the judicious distribution of government advertising, which might be worth from $100 to $300 per year.[83] Even for occasional printing work, party affiliation was the most important criterion in the awarding of contracts.[84] Federal patronage was more extensive than anything Regina could offer, and this too was distributed by the Liberals.

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[78] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, Series A, W. R. Motherwell to Calder, 7 May 1906; series P(1), Calder to H. C. McColl, 9 April 1907; Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. Young, 3 October 1908, p. 38828.

[79] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, series MPW, Calder to A. Bradley, 2 June 1906; F. J. Robinson to Calder, 8 February 1907; series A, Calder to C. R. Gough, 8 May 1907.

[80] *Ibid.*, series MPW, F. J. Robinson to Calder, 26 March 1907; series MG, same to same, 25 August 1908; same to same, 14 October 1908.

[81] Walter Scott, for example, had owned the Moose Jaw *Times* since 1894 and the Regina *Leader* since 1895. He sold the *Leader* to other Liberals in 1906 but retained control of the Moose Jaw newspaper for many years. (*Historical Directory of Saskatchewan Newspapers, 1878-1950* [Saskatoon: Office of the Saskatchewan Archives, 1951], pp. 61, 81.)

Foreign language newspapers were, in Walter Scott's opinion, "an essential adjunct to our party organization,"[85] and the Liberals were quick to consolidate their position among the province's various ethnic groups. In 1907, for instance, a group of Liberal supporters founded a German newspaper in Regina. The initial stock subscription was taken up by Liberal members of the Legislature and the House of Commons.[86] A German newspaper in Saskatchewan might well be an excellent business proposition as its promoters claimed, but its real value was political:

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[82] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1909, No. 12, *Return to an Order of the House for a Return showing the amounts paid to the Leader and the Leader Times Company for printing and advertising done during the years 1905, 1906, 1907, 1908 and 1909 to date.*

[83] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to T. Sanderson, 2 November 1907, p. 50301.

[84] Thus, for example, only Liberal newspapers were considered by the government when awarding contracts for the printing of the voters' lists in 1908. When it was discovered that one of the papers so favoured had been sold to a Conservative syndicate, the work was given to another paper. (*Ibid.*, Scott to E. Williamson, 1 September 1908, p. 37052; H. C. Pierce to Scott, 5 October 1908, p. 37132; private secretary to H. C. Pierce, 14 October 1908, p. 37133.)

[85] *Ibid.*, Scott to J. Appleton, 22 September 1906, p. 50092.

> There is not a Dominion or local Constituency in Saskatchewan in which there is not a very heavy German vote, and as the majority of them have been voting Liberal in the past it is very important indeed that they should be kept thoroughly posted regarding the political questions of the day.[87]

Der Courier commenced publication in November 1907, and within seven months its editor claimed a circulation of more than 4,000.[88]

The Liberals might have an initial advantage in the 1908 election, but both sides worked feverishly to perfect their party machinery and complete the nomination of candidates.[89] The government appears to have had few problems in this regard, except in Redberry, where George Langley was considered by some local men to be unsuitable. It would be a serious matter if the sitting member in any riding were not again to receive the party's nomination, Scott warned, and particularly so in Langley's case, "... on account of his prominent connection with the Provincial Grain Growers'

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[86] AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, W. Scott to Motherwell, 12 July 1907, pp. 12636-37.

[87] As, J. A. Calder Papers, series P(1), Calder to J. H. Ross, 22 February 1908.

[88] *Ibid.*, series P(2), P. M. Bredt to Calder, 23 May 1908.

[89] *Leader*, 22 July 1908, 23 July 1908.

Association."[90] The trouble in Redberry was apparently smoothed over, and the Liberals were able to avoid an embarrasing situation which might have injured the government with members of the S.G.G.A. throughout the province.[91] Two members of the cabinet chose to run in new ridings: Scott in Swift Current and Calder in Milestone. The Provincial Rights party experienced no serious difficulty in securing candidates, despite the short notice, and by 31 July all but two were in the field.[92] Haultain's greatest disappointment must have been the decision by J. T. Brown to accept a federal nomination for the Liberal party in Qu'Appelle.[93] The loss of Brown, the only Liberal elected as a Haultain supporter in the first provincial contest, weakened the credibility of the Provincial Rights party as a truly nonpartisan organization. Haultain's appeal for support irrespective of federal party divisions would be less attractive than it had been in 1905.

During the election campaign Liberals stressed the practical achievements of the Scott government and its policies for the future development of the province.[94] The Regina *Leader* pointed to the telephone legislation as one example of the "businesslike and progressive" policy of Premier Scott and his colleagues.[95] In his speeches Scott stoutly defended the decision not to enter the rural telephone field. To have done so would have involved very heavy government expenditures, perhaps as much as $15,000,000. The experience of other governments and large telephone organizations was proof that his policy of assistance to rural mutual companies was the best method of bringing the telephone to the farmer.[96] Two weeks before the election the government announced that it had purchased large quantities of poles, insulators and wire, and that construction of the first long distance lines would begin before the end of August.[97]

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[90] AS, Walter Scott Papers, A. R. Shea to Scott, 23 July 1908, p. 38225; Scott to A. R. Shea, 24 July 1908, p. 38226.

[91] *Ibid.*, Scott to W. Andrew, 8 August 1908, pp. 38388-89.

[92] *Standard*, 31 July 1908.

[93] *Leader*, 22 January 1908.

[94] *Pluck! Push! Progress! The Scott Government's Record* (n.p., 1908?).

Railways easily overshadowed telephones as the main theme in the Liberal campaign. The letter which Scott had written to Laurier before the election urging the need for rapid railway extension was made public, and the Liberals circulated a map showing in a highly visible way the lines which the federal government had agreed to assist.[98] The Scott government promised if returned to office to implement a policy of bond guarantees to encourage the extension of branch and feeder lines.[99]

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[95] *Leader*, 21 July 1908.

[96] *Ibid.*, 29 July 1908.

[97] *Ibid.*, 1 August 1908.

[98] *Railways! Roads! Telephones! The Scott Government Stands Pledged to an Aggressive Railway Policy* (n.p., 1908?); *Leader*, 1 August 1908; *Daily Phoenix* (Saskatoon), 8 August 1908.

Provincial control of public lands and the extravagance and mismanagement of the Scott government were the questions which Haultain and his supporters referred to most frequently. They termed the Liberal railway policy a "hollow sham." It was easy for Premier Scott to make lavish promises of branch railways during the campaign. The government would find it more difficult to carry out these promises once the election was over, because of the inadequate financial terms which Scott had accepted in 1905 and his reckless administration of affairs since then.[100] Instead Haultain offered the voters branch railways as they were required and as the resources of the province would permit them to be built.[101]

The Provincial Rights party was equally critical of the operation of the Supplementary Revenue Act, repeating the arguments they had employed when the bill had been debated in the Legislature. The tax was levied on the farmer, the homesteader and the rancher, but the wealthiest parts of the province -- the village and town school districts -- were exempt, and Haultain promised to repeal the Act if he formed the government after 14 August.[102] The Liberals were vulnerable on this issue. The Act had not worked out as well as anticipated, and at the 1908 Local Improvement Districts Association convention a resolution was introduced demanding its repeal. The resolution was defeated, but the Act was still not well understood in many country districts.[103] The Liberals took great pains during the campaign to emphasize that the Supplementary Revenue Act compelled non-resident landholders to contribute to the development of rural schools, and that for every dollar farmers in rural districts paid under the measure two or three times that amount was returned to the district to provide schools for their children.[104]

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[99] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, series P(1), Calder to T. M. Bryce, 24 July 1908; *Leader*, 28-29 July 1908.

[100] *Standard*, 27 July 1908, 4 August 1908.

[101] *Vidette* (Indian Head), 31 July 1908; *Standard* 3 August 1908.

[102] *Leader*, 30 July 1908; *Standard*, 31 July 1908; *Daily Phoenix* (Saskatoon), 4 August 1908.

The 1908 election was a relatively pallid affair, though the sensational charges which were so much a part of any election contest at the time were not entirely absent. The Regina *Standard* claimed that Walter Scott was a shareholder in the Saskatchewan Valley Land Company, a charge which the president of the company denied.[105] At a campaign meeting in Regina Premier Scott charged that H. W. Laird, the Provincial Rights candidate in that city and a former alderman, was a "grafter."[106] Conservative newspapers accused the government of importing election workers from outside the province and of using "misrepresentation, boodle and corrupt work" to win the election.[107] The Liberals were convinced that the centre of Haultain's organization was in Winnipeg and that Manitoba Conservatives were actively assisting him in the campaign.[108] The Regina *Leader* published the names of these "well-drilled election crooks" who were working under the direction of the "wily Rogers" to secure a victory for the Provincial Rights party, and warned Saskatchewan voters to be on their guard.[109]

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[103] *Leader*, 8 April 1908; AS, Walter Scott Papers, S. Latta to Scott, 26 August 1908, p. 38971; C. J. Rossborough to Scott, 12 September 1908, pp. 39043-45.

[104] *The Supplementary Revenue Act. Its Successful Operation. $145,000 for Rural Schools. Facts vs. Misrepresentations* (n.p. 1908?); *Leader*, 28 July 1908; *Battleford Press*, 5 August 1908.

[105] *Standard*, 29 July 1908; *Leader*, 6 August 1908.

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[106] *Leader*, 29 July 1908. Scott repeated the accusation later in the campaign and was charged with criminal libel. He appeared before a Regina magistrate on 10 August and declared that Laird had received a $5,000 bribe in connection with a waterworks contract. The case was then adjourned until after the elections. In the end the charges were withdrawn because the jury could not agree. (*C.A.R.*, 1908, pp. 494-95; 1909, p. 522.)

[107] *Standard*, 3 August 1908; *West* (Regina), 12 August 1908.

[108] AS, Walter Scott Papers, E. L. Cash to Scott, 1 August 1908, p. 38339; Scott to E. Laycock, 11 August 1908, p. 38190. Saskatchewan Liberals were not alone in recognizing the importance to their Conservative opponents of control of the Manitoba government. J. W. Dafoe, editor of the *Manitoba Free Press*, commented in 1907 that "the defeat of the Roblin Government at the present juncture would break the power of the Conservative party west of the Lakes for a decade because the motive power for the entire political machinery in all this territory has come from the Government Buildings on Kennedy Street." (PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, J. W. Dafoe to Sifton, 8 February 1907, p. 145365.)

[109] *Leader*, 7 August 1908, 10 August 1908, 12 August 1908. Robert Rogers, a member of the Conservative government in Manitoba, had acquired a well-earned reputation for his skill in political organization and was generally regarded by western Liberals as the evil genius behind the Conservative "machine."

The selection of a site for the provincial university and agricultural college was an important local issue in a number of ridings. The University Act authorized the Board of Governors to choose the site, and several communities, including Regina, Moose Jaw, Indian Head, Saskatoon and Prince Albert pressed their claims for consideration.[110] The Liberal candidate in Moose Jaw declared at his nominating convention that he would exert all his influence to bring the university to his city. In Saskatoon A. P. McNab, a local businessman and member of the Board of Governors, promised that if he was elected and the university was not located there, he would resign his seat. The question was not as important in Regina, though the *Leader* did imply late in the campaign that a vote for J. F. Bole, the government candidate, could not harm the chances of the capital city for the university.[111]

From the beginning of the election contest the Liberals were confident of victory.[112] On 13 August Scott ventured a prediction that his opponents would not win more than thirteen seats,[113] and the result of the vote next day proved that he was not far wrong. The Provincial Rights Party won fourteen seats, and the Liberals twenty-six. A Liberal victory in the deferred election in Athabasca increased their total to twenty-seven, giving the government a very comfortable majority in the new Legislature. The election was actually much closer than these figures indicate. The government secured little more than half -- 50.5 per cent -- of the total vote polled. In eleven ridings the Liberal was elected by a majority of 99 votes or less, and three Provincial Rights supporters won by similar narrow margins. W. R. Motherwell, J. A. Calder, Thomas Sanderson and D. D. Ellis all failed to win seats in the new Legislature.[114]

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[110] J. E. Murray, "The Contest for the University of Saskatchewan," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XII, No. 1 (Winter 1959), pp. 1-10.

[111] *Moose Jaw Times*, 28 July 1908; *Daily Phoenix* (Saskatoon), 13 August 1908; *Leader*, 13 August 1908.

[112] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. B. Cochran, 31 July 1908, p. 38288; *Leader*, 3 August 1908.

[113] *Leader*, 13 August 1908.

Premier Scott believed that the election had been a fair test of strength between the two parties. "Any advantage we had in taking the enemy by surprise they were able to offset before the end by the army of workers sent in from Manitoba." Without this assistance, according to Scott, the Provincial Rights party would not have won more than five or six seats.[115] The short duration of the contest meant that party organization was "pretty loose on both sides" and Liberals and Provincial Rights supporters agreed that a longer campaign might have produced a different result.[116] As in 1905, the Provincial Rights party was most successful in ridings along or south of the C.P.R. main line, taking eight of the sixteen seats there. The Liberals won nineteen of the twenty-five seats in central and northern Saskatchewan. The four cities divided evenly: Regina and Saskatoon for Scott, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert for Haultain. There is little reason to dispute the explanation of the result offered by one of the Conservative newspapers: Premier Scott's railway policy had proved to be extremely popular in recently settled areas where the transportation problem was most acute.[117] These were the "back settlements", but Scott declared at Rosthern shortly after the election that the Liberals were proud to be identified with the homesteader, who was "the bone and sinew and the best intelligence and true foundation of the development of this Province."[118]

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[114] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 40, 91-157; Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," p. 344. A third member of the cabinet, W. F. A. Turgeon, was defeated in Prince Albert City but elected in Duck Lake.

[115] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. H. V. Bulyea, 19 August 1908, p. 38612; *Leader*, 17 August 1908. Scott did not attempt to hide the fact that he had called a "snap" election and freely admitted in a speech at Rosthern that the cabinet had agreed on 13 June, the day after prorogation of the Legislature, to hold an election that summer. (*Leader*, 27 August 1908.)

Haultain certainly recognized the necessity of securing a greater degree of support among new settlers, and in 1908 his party made a concerted effort to appeal to the American vote by nominating candidates like George Beischel in Weyburn and P. M. Hendricks, a former Minnesota state senator, in Hanley. The Provincial Rights party no doubt anticipated that such men would be attractive to the many German-American settlers in the province, but neither candidate was successful.[119] This must have been a disappointment to Haultain, but it did point up the difficult task which his party would face in attempting to secure the support of the German-speaking voter in Saskatchewan. The Liberals had effectively organized in the German community, by founding a German Liberal club in Regina, for example.[120] They controlled *Der Courier* and other German newspapers which circulated in the province[121] and were not embarrassed by the statements of their eastern colleagues as Saskatchewan Conservatives often were. As a German voter in Yorkton put it,

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[116] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. R. Bastien, 18 August 1908, p. 38250; W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to P. Ferguson, 24 September 1908, p. 12708; *Standard*, 17 August 1908.

[117] *Esterhazy Observer*, 27 August 1908.

[118] *Leader*, 27 August 1908.

> ... with a very few exceptions the Germans of Saskatchewan a [*sic*] Good Liberals, and as long as our torry [*sic*] friends use this word foreigners so much as they now do we are sure of the German vote as we consider ourself once naturaliced [*sic*] as good Canadians as Mr. Borden and his Gang are.[122]

Political matters continued to occupy the attention of the government during the fall and winter of 1908. Prime Minister Laurier called a federal election for 26 October, and Scott and his colleagues spoke and worked on behalf of federal Liberal candidates in the province. Two provincial M.L.A.'s, D. B. Neely and Thomas McNutt, were successful in the federal contest, and this provided an opportunity for Scott's defeated cabinet colleagues to obtain new seats in the Legislature. By-elections were held on 7 December to fill the vacancies in Saltcoats and Humboldt, and Calder and Motherwell were easily elected. At the same time A. P. McNab was taken into the cabinet as head of a new Department of Municipal Affairs, and he was returned by acclamation on 24 December.[123]

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[119] PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, E. C. Fisher to Sifton, 25 August 1908, pp. 147641-42; *Standard*, 30 July 1908. Beischel was defeated by a margin of 760-732, Hendricks by 704-658. (*Legislative Directory*, pp. 104, 154.)

[120] *Leader*, 9 May 1908.

[121] *Der Nordwestern*, a Liberal newspaper published in Winnipeg, had a circulation of more than 7,000 in Saskatchewan. (AS, Walter Scott Papers, H. Carstens to Scott, 22 July 1908, p. 38216.)

[122] *Ibid.*, J. Z. Walters to Scott, 9 December 1908, p. 39140.

Premier Scott and the Liberals regarded their victory in the 1908 election as a mandate for a more aggressive railway policy. The government had not seriously considered the possiblity of advancing cash subsidies or of building lines on its own initiative, but instead decided to follow the example of Manitoba and guarantee the bonds of private companies. Through such a policy Manitoba had obtained railway facilities and railway competition, Scott told a meeting of party supporters shortly after the election, and Saskatchewan could do likewise.[124] J. A. Calder introduced legislation in January 1909 which was calculated to obtain all the local and branch lines which Saskatchewan required. The bills provided for the guarantee of bonds to the extent of $13,000 per mile, with the government to secure a first mortgage on the lines assisted in this way. The Canadian Northern was authorized to build over 400 miles of line in the province, and the Grand Trunk Pacific obtained assistance for nearly 200 miles.[125] The bond guarantee policy was debated with great enthusiasm, as each member stressed the need for improved railway facilities in his locality. While Haultain endorsed the scheme in principle, he urged that the government be given the power to control railway rates on these lines, and grant running rights to other companies as a means of encouraging greater competition. An amendment to this effect which he introduced prior to third reading of the railway bills was rejected on a straight party division.[126]

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[123] *C.A.R.*, 1908, pp. 477, 499.

[124] *Leader*, 27 August 1908.

The railway bond guarantee programme proved to be a mixed blessing for the Scott government. Even with such assistance the Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific found it difficult to complete the construction of railway lines as quickly as the Liberals and their constituents desired. When the government agreed to assist a particular line, settlers along the proposed route invariably took this to be a direct obligation on the railway to begin construction at once.[127] Political considerations dictated that no area of the province be neglected, and Scott and his colleagues stressed this point repeatedly in their correspondence with the railways.[128] The government in fact possessed little influence, apart from friendly persuasion, for it was the availability of labour and materials and the traffic potential of given lines which determined construction priorities.[129] Scott and Calder acknowledged at the fall session of the Legislature that they were somewhat disappointed with the progress of railway construction during the summer, but this did not deter the government from introducing legislation assisting an additional 1,050 miles of Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific lines in the province.[130]

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[125] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8-9 Edw. VII, Chapters 3-4.

[126] *Leader*, 19-20 January 1909, 23 January 1909, 25 January 1909; *Journals*, 1908-1909, pp. 71-73.

[127] T. D. Regehr, "The Canadian Northern Railway: Agent of National Growth, 1896-1911" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1967), p. 179.

In other areas the government could point to more substantial achievement by the end of 1909. One was the provincial university, another the government telephone system. On 20 August 1908 the Board of Governors of the University of Saskatchewan announced the appointment of Walter Murray of Dalhousie University as the first President of the new institution. To President Murray and his colleagues on the Board fell the responsibility for determining the location of the university and the scope of its academic programme. The choice of a site would not be an easy one, for several communities had put forward a claim for consideration and the question had become an issue in the recent provincial election. The Board of Governors decided to postpone a decision on this question until it had resolved another: whether courses in agriculture would be offered by the university or by a separate institution.[131] At least one member of the cabinet, W. R. Motherwell, initially favoured the establishment of a separate institution, in the tradition of the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph of which he was a graduate.[132] A committee of the Board of Governors and the Senate visited universities in Manitoba, Ontario and the American Middle West to gather information on this and related matters, and upon their return to Saskatchewan recommended that the College of Agriculture be made an integral part of the University of Saskatchewan, located on the same campus.[133]

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[128] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to W. H. Church, 14 July 1909, pp. 53719-20; J. A. Calder Papers, series P(2), Calder to W. Mackenzie, 17 April 1909.

[129] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to R. Campbell, 16 July 1909, pp. 54142-43.

[130] *Leader*, 23 November 1909, 20 December 1909; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 9 Edw. VII, Chapters 4-5. On third reading of the bills Haultain moved an amendment giving the government power to control railway rates on the lines so assisted and to decide on the location of the mileage to be constructed each year, but his amendment was of course defeated. (*Journals*, 1909, pp. 100-102.)

With this matter resolved the Board then returned to the difficult task of selecting the site of the university. In April

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[131] A. S. Morton, *Making of a University*, pp. 34-43.

[132] A. R. Turner, "W. R. Motherwell and Agricultural Education, 1905-1918," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1959), pp. 91-92. Such a division was also implied in the provisions of the Supplementary Revenue Act whereby 5 per cent of the tax revenue was to be allocated to the provincial university and 5 per cent to the agricultural college.

[133] A. S. Morton, *Making of a University*, pp. 43-44.

1909, after a spirited campaign by citizens of the contending centres, and after a careful survey of the various locations, the Board of Governors decided in favour of Saskatoon.[134] Whether intended or not, the selection of that city had the effect of removing any sense of grievance which might have remained in central and northern Saskatchewan as a result of the decision in 1906 to make Regina the permanent capital of the province. Once these preliminary questions were resolved, the organization of the university proceeded rapidly. The Board of Governors secured a large tract of land overlooking the South Saskatchewan River and began the preparation of architectural plans for the impressive stone buildings which would soon begin to rise from the raw prairie. The College of Arts and Science opened in September 1909 in a downtown business block, with an enrollment of seventy, twelve of whom were women, and a staff of five.[135]

The first report of the Department of Railways, Telegraphs and Telephones recorded the progress of the government telephone system since its inauguration. The Department had begun work on two long distance lines in 1908, north from Lumsden to Saskatoon, and southeast from Regina to connect with the Manitoba long distance system, and planned a more extensive construction programme in 1909. The large number of inquiries received by departmental officials, and the organization of thirty-one rural telephone companies during the first year showed the popularity of the Rural Telephone Act among the farmers of the province.[136] Later in 1909 the government purchased the facilities of the two largest private companies and thereby secured a complete monopoly of long distance telephone service in Saskatchewan.

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[134] Murray, "Contest for the University of Saskatchewan," pp. 17-20.

[135] A. S. Morton, *Making of a University*, pp. 71-76.

Judging from remarks in the House during the debate on the government's telephone legislation and newspaper comment at the time, there seems to have been general support for the immediate acquisition of the private telephone systems. The Bell Telephone Company and the Saskatchewan Telephone Company certainly were aware of this sentiment, and were not anxious to compete with the government in the telephone business. Even before the telephone bills were brought down in the Legislature, A. B. Cox, president of the latter company, wrote to Calder and offered to sell his plant and equipment to the government "upon fair and equitable terms." C. F. Size, president of the Bell Company, publicly indicated a similar intention at the annual shareholders' meeting in Montreal a few days later.[137] The government professed only slight interest in taking over the lines, and negotiations proceeded slowly. Premier Scott rejected a firm offer of sale from the Saskatchewan Telephone Company in June 1908. The work of constructing long distance lines would occupy the attention of his government for some time to come, Scott explained, and he did not wish to burden the new telephone department with the additional responsibility of operating local exchanges.[138]

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[136] Saskatchewan, Department of Railways, Telegraphs and Telephones, *Annual Report*, 1909 (Regina: Government Printer, 1909), p. 6.

[137] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1909, No. 9, A. B. Cox to J. A. Calder, 25 February 1908; *Leader*, 28 February 1908.

Following the 1908 provincial election Scott announced that his government was prepared to purchase the facilities of the two private telephone companies.[139] Negotiations with the Bell Company began in January 1909. The government indicated that it wished to purchase only the long distance lines, but the Bell executives were unwilling to dispose of any part of the system unless they could dispose of the whole.[140] The final negotiations took place in Montreal and on 20 April 1909 the government purchased the complete Bell plant and facilities in the province for the sum of $367,500.[141]

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[138] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1909, No. 9, A. B. Cox to W. Scott, 8 June 1908; W. Scott to A. B. Cox, 16 June 1908. The hesitation with which Premier Scott approached the question of taking over the lines of the two private companies may have been simply an astute bargaining ploy, or it may have been a result of Francis Dagger's report to the government. The telephone expert had offered no opinion on the advisability of purchasing the private systems in the province, but his recommendation that the government confine its activities to long distance service implied that the purchase of the two companies would be unwise, since it would thereby involve the government in the operation of local exchanges. (*Report of Mr. Francis Dagger*, pp. 15-17). Nevertheless, the government did engage an independent expert to conduct a valuation for the government should it decide to purchase, and Scott wrote to Premier Rutherford to determine what price the Alberta government had paid for the plant and facilities of the Bell Company in that province. (SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1909, No. 9, S. P. Porter to H. W. Kent, 7 March 1908; AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to A. C. Rutherford, 1 June 1908, p. 59180.)

[139] *Leader*, 27 August 1908.

The announcement of the sale produced a burst of self-congratulation on the part of the government and its chief newspaper supporter. The Minister of Telephones boasted that the price agreed upon was exceedingly low, and would compare very favourably with the price paid by the Manitoba and Alberta governments in acquiring the Bell systems in those provinces. The Regina *Leader* modestly termed the agreement between the government and the Bell Company "a splendid bargain ... so good as to be almost unheard of in the annals of transactions between governments and wealthy business corporations." Two months later the government purchased the plant and facilities of the Saskatchewan Telephone Company, an event which passed almost unnoticed, even in the pages of the *Leader*.[142]

The government had been prepared, after some hesitation, to take over the private telephone companies and thereby secure a monopoly in the long distance field. When the S.G.G.A. urged similar action to secure a government monopoly of grain storage facilities in the province, Premier Scott and his colleagues proved much less willing to act. The premiers of the three prairie provinces met in Regina in May 1908 to consider the feasibility of joint action in the matter, and discussed the question with representatives of the Interprovincial Council of Grain Growers and Farmers' Associations at a second conference in the Saskatchewan capital in November. Following this second meeting Premiers Roblin, Rutherford and Scott promised to consult with their cabinet colleagues and make a joint reply to the farmers' request for implementation of the Partridge Plan.[143]

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[140] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1909, No. 9, J. A. Calder to F. G. Webber, 27 January 1909; C. F. Size to J. A. Calder, 4 February 1909.

[141] *Ibid.*, Memorandum of agreement signed by L. B. McFarlane, General Manager, Bell Telephone Company, and J. A. Calder, 20 April 1909.

[142] *Leader*, 22 April 1909, 10 June 1909.

The elevator question was of particular interest to Saskatchewan, since that province was rapidly overtaking Manitoba as the largest grain producer in Canada.[144] The Scott government had shown itself to be sympathetic to the wishes of the farmers in the past, but it was no secret that the cabinet had little enthusiasm for government ownership of elevators. W. R. Motherwell was "diametrically opposed" to the Partridge Plan, which he regarded as "... entirely visionary, although it makes a very nice fairy tale."[145] Premier Scott was not as outspoken as his colleague, but he too was unsympathetic to the proposal.[146] In public the Liberals claimed that improved railway facilities would be of greater benefit to farmers in marketing their crop than government ownership of elevators.[147] The farmers' demand for government elevators presented the first threat of a serious breach between the Liberals and the S.G.G.A., but in the end the close working relationship between the government and the Grain Growers emerged stronger than ever. For this reason the events leading to the creation of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company -- surely one of the most important legislative accomplishments of the Scott government -- merit closer scrutiny.

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[143] *Ibid.*, 5 May 1908, 27 November 1908.

[144] Saskatchewan definitely passed Manitoba in wheat acreage and production in 1909. (Patton, p. 81.)

[145] AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to D. McKinnon, 2 February 1907, pp. 7087-88.

The three premiers issued a joint statement in January 1909 and refused to participate in a system of government-owned elevators without a monopoly position which, they believed, could only be secured by amendment of the British North America Act. They emphasized the financial as well as the constitutional difficulties involved in such a scheme, predicting that the cost of acquiring the 1,334 country elevators then in operation on the prairies might be as high as $10,000,000.[148]

This argument did not dissuade the Grain Growers, and they continued to press for implementation of the Partridge Plan. At its annual convention in February 1909 the S.G.G.A. reaffirmed its support for government ownership and decided to sponsor a publicity campaign among the farmers of the province.[149] The Interprovincial Council stated publicly in March that it had not demanded a government monopoly of grain handling facilities, though there is evidence to suggest that the farmers' representatives had privately agreed in November that a monopoly was essential.[150] In Saskatchewan, the farmers were joined in their demand for government elevators by the leader of the Provincial Rights party.

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[146] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to H. Chevrier, 6 May 1908, p. 39767.

[147] *Leader*, 8 April 1908, 15 December 1908, 8 January 1909.

[148] *Ibid.*, 30 January 1909.

F. W. G. Haultain and his supporters had remained conspicuously silent on the elevator question since the defeat of their request for an inquiry in April 1908. They had not made the Partridge Plan an issue in the provincial election held that year, though in at least one riding a Provincial Rights convention passed a resolution favouring government ownership and operation of all elevators in Saskatchewan.[151] Haultain broke his party's silence on the issue in March 1909. At a banquet in Nokomis he and five of his colleagues declared in favour of a system of government elevators operated by an independent commission. He had not wished to prejudice the negotiations between the premiers and the Grain Growers by speaking out earlier, Haultain claimed, but now that the premiers had given an "entirely unsatisfactory" answer to the farmers' request for government ownership, he was free to do so. The remedy for the near-monopoly control of grain handling facilities by private companies lay in government intervention to restore competition. If the government were to establish elevators with the proper facilities for cleaning, storing and shipping grain at a number of country points, it would soon force the private companies to provide similar facilities. This was a matter of such importance to the farming population that it ought not to be made a party question, Haultain believed, and he pledged his support to the government in working out a practical elevator scheme.[152]

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[149] AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1909, p. 14.

[150] *Leader*, 1 March 1909. According to Premier Scott, "when we met the delegates here on 26th November they unanimously agreed to the suggestion that it would be unwise and unsafe for the Provinces to go into the elevator business except under monopoly conditions." (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to T. M. Bryce, 20 February 1909, p. 40210.) The same assertion may be found in the Speech from the Throne opening the second session of 1909. (*Journals*, 1909, p. 9.)

[151] *Herald* (Whitewood), 30 July 1908.

The S.G.G.A. attempted through Premier Scott to arrange another joint conference in the summer of 1909. Scott replied that the three premiers were of the opinion that until the necessary amendments to the British North America Act were secured, nothing could be gained by such a meeting.[153] These constitutional difficulties, whether real or imaginary, brought the joint negotiations to an end, and the S.G.G.A. decided to approach the Scott government directly.[154] F. W. Green appeared on behalf of the farmers' organization before the Agriculture Committee of the Legislature in December 1909. He presented a petition requesting the government to introduce legislation "... providing for the acquirement or creation of Government owned storage facilities at initial points ... throughout the province sufficient for the requirements of the farmers in the marketing of their grain and for the operation of the same by a commission."[155] The matter was now placed squarely before the government and the Legislature and, as Premier Scott recognized, some action would be necessary:

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[152] *West* (Regina), 31 March 1909. The other Provincial Rights M.L.A.'s present at Nokomis were T. A. Anderson, A. E. Whitmore, A. B. Gillis, H. H. Willway and A. W. Riddell.

[153] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to R. C. Sanderson, 1 September 1909, p. 40230.

> The agitation in the Province is producing an effect upon the Members of the Assembly most of whom insist now that some steps must be taken in the direction of meeting the demands of the Grain Growers.[156]

The Agriculture Committee considered the petition presented by the S.G.G.A. and recommended that a commission be appointed "... for the purpose of making searching inquiry into proposals looking to the creation and operation of a system of elevators to effect the objects outlined by the Grain Growers' Association...."[157]

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[154] *Ibid.*, F. W. Green to Scott, 11 November 1909, p. 39852.

[155] *Leader*, 3 December 1909.

[156] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to T. M. Bryce, 8 December 1909, p. 39876.

[157] *Journals*, 1909, p. 67.

Spokesmen of both parties had declared at the beginning of the session that they were prepared to co-operate in solving the elevator problem, and the Opposition was critical only of the fact that the resolution contained no specific reference to government elevators and that the Premier had offered no assurance that he would implement the recommendations of the Commission. The debate was brief, and the resolution received unanimous approval by the Legislature on 14 December.[158] In Manitoba events took a different turn, and two days later the Roblin government declared that it would accede to the farmers' wishes and immediately introduce a government elevator scheme.[159]

Premier Scott's reluctance to make any public commitment in favour of government ownership and operation of elevators was not difficult to understand. W. R. Motherwell was as strongly opposed to government elevators as ever.[160] Scott himself privately admitted that a government system possessed the inherent dangers of political manipulation and undue local pressure in the location and management of elevators and hoped that he would not be driven into a system of direct government ownership.[161] In fact he had good reason to believe that this would not happen. The executive of the S.G.G.A. had informed him in confidence that they were, in Scott's words, "not wedded to their own scheme and ... quite willing to consider any alternate scheme that may be suggested to serve the same purpose." F. W. Green had made a similar statement when he appeared before the Legislature to state the farmers' case for public ownership.[162] This flexibility on the part of the S.G.G.A. executive was to be of great benefit to the Liberals, for Scott was already considering another scheme whereby the government would provide financial assistance to local elevators owned by the farmers themselves.[163]

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[158] *Leader*, 23 November 1909, 15 December 1909.

[159] Patton, pp. 84-85.

[160] *Leader*, 15 December 1909.

[161] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to T. M. Bryce, 8 December 1909, p. 39876; Scott to R. P. Roblin, 13 December 1909, p. 40252.

The idea was not Scott's alone, for he and his colleagues received a number of suggestions that the government assist local farmers' elevators in the same way as it had assisted creameries and rural telephone companies.[164] The Premier read one of these letters in the Legislature during the debate on the elevator question for the purpose, he later claimed, of giving "a hint as to what might be expected."[165] Such a scheme had much to commend it, Scott believed. It would avoid the "grave economic and political dangers" of public ownership, and it was based on the principle of "granting ... a measure of Government aid sufficient to make a locally owned system financially possible and leaving the responsibility of the maintenance and operation upon the local communities" which the Liberals had accepted on two previous occasions.[166]

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[162] *Ibid.*, Scott to R. P. Roblin, 13 December 1909, p. 40252; *Leader*, 3 December 1909.

[163] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. Thomson, 23 November 1909, p. 39881.

[164] AS, Walter Scott Papers, L. Thomson to Scott, 22 November 1909, pp. 39878-80; W. Hordern to Scott, 11 December 1909, pp. 39886-87; G. H. V. Bulyea to Scott, 24 December 1909, pp. 39934-37; W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, T. H. McGuire to Turgeon, 25 November 1909; W. R. Motherwell Papers, C. Lunn to Motherwell, 20 January 1910, pp. 7133-34.

Premier Scott approached the task of selecting the members of the Elevator Commission with the same deliberate thoroughness which had characterized his search for a telephone expert three years before. He began by asking President Walter Murray of the University of Saskatchewan to suggest the name of a "thoroughly versed economist" who might serve on the Commission. Murray listed a number of possibilities, including Adam Shortt of the Civil Service Commission in Ottawa, Professor John R. Commons of the University of Wisconsin, President McVey of the University of North Dakota and Professor Robert Magill of Dalhousie University.[167]

The S.G.G.A. executive were anxious that the Commission be appointed without delay, and certainly before the provincial convention which would take place early in February.[168] This the Premier could not promise, for he anticipated that it would take some time to obtain an economic expert with suitable qualifications. The government's first choice, Adam Shortt, was willing to serve, but difficulties stood in the way, and Scott was attempting to have these removed. The Premier intimated that he would appoint a Commission of five, consisting of three farmers, an economic expert and a fifth member who would possess a thorough knowledge of the grain trade. The three farmer representatives would "probably" be selected from the S.G.G.A. executive.[169]

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[165] *Leader*, 15 December 1909; AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. H. V. Bulyea, 29 December 1909, p. 39938.

[166] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to A. W. Frye, 29 December 1909, p. 39932.

[167] *Ibid.*, Scott to W. Murray, 31 December 1909, p. 40394; W. Murray to Scott, 6 January 1910, pp. 40395-98.

The delay in the appointment of the Elevator Commission provoked a lively debate at the Grain Growers' convention in Prince Albert. The delegates unanimously reaffirmed their support for government elevators and pledged themselves "to show a united front until our ends are attained." W. R. Motherwell addressed the convention on behalf of the provincial government. He did not announce the appointment of the Elevator Commission, as many anticipated he might do, but simply repeated the assurance which Premier Scott had made privately to F. W. Green that three of its five members would be farmers.[170] The delegates were disappointed and, as one of them later recalled, there was a general feeling at the convention that the government was stalling.[171] This was bad enough, but the next day Motherwell informed the delegates that probably only two of the three farmer members of the Commission would be appointed by the S.G.G.A. F. W. Green rose to announce that he had a personal letter from the Premier promising that three of the five members would be nominated by the farmers' organization. The delegates were now thoroughly aroused, and insisted that Green read the correspondence. He refused to do so, claiming that some of the matters referred to were not yet settled. The convention accepted this explanation but then passed a resolution deploring the delay in the appointment of the Elevator Commission and demanding that the S.G.G.A. executive nominate the three farmer members.[172]

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[168] *Ibid.*, F. W. Green to Scott, 11 January 1910, p. 40385.

[169] *Ibid.*, Scott to F. W. Green, 15 January 1910, pp. 40387-88; same to same, 31 January 1910, pp. 40390-91. Scott authorized Green to use these letters to explain the delay in the appointment of the Elevator Commission, on the condition that Shortt's name remain confidential until the negotiations with him had been completed.

On 28 February 1910 the government finally announced the membership of the Commission: Professor Robert Magill of Dalhousie University, and George Langley and F. W. Green, director and secretary, respectively, of the S.G.G.A.[173] Scott had decided against appointing a commission of five because he had not been able to find an elevator expert who would be acceptable to both the government and the farmers. He interviewed a number of economic experts, including Adam Shortt, O. D. Skelton of Queen's University and John R. Commons of Wisconsin before obtaining the services of Magill.[174]

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[170] AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1910, pp. 14-17.

[171] G. F. Edwards, "Recollections of the S.G.G.A. Convention of 1910," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. III, No. 2 (Spring, 1950), p. 66.

[172] AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1910, pp. 17-18.

[173] *Leader*, 28 February 1910.

The selection of George Langley and F. W. Green might seem surprising, when it is remembered that only two weeks before the S.G:G.A. convention had again declared it support for government elevators. As members of the executive they were officially committed to the Partridge Plan, and might be expected to endorse this scheme in their report to the government. Langley, who had known since December that he might be appointed to the Commission, privately expressed serious reservations about the feasibility of a government elevator system:

> I have been uniformly opposed to buying up all the Elevators feeling certain this could not be done without our running the risk of starting the thing at a disadvantage, the one certain thing being we should buy many that would be useless and at a price that would be unreasonable. Then the question comes should we buy any at all. I am strongly inclined to the belief that in Saskatchewan we should give the matter the utmost attention before we think of buying at all. further [*sic*] I do not like the idea of starting an Elevator System without the farmers themselves having a financial interest in the undertaking.[175]

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[174] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. Langley, 28 February 1910, pp. 40451-52.

[175] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, G. Langley to Crerar, 27 December 1909.

The two farm leaders were aware that the Premier was considering an alternate plan involving government assistance to farmers' elevators, and, according to Scott, both had indicated approval of it:

> Langley thinks the Grain Growers will be quite satisfied if the suggestion [aid to farmers' elevators] can be carried out and Fred. Green ... in private discussion with us expressed himself as thinking that such a scheme if it could be worked out would be a good deal safer and more satisfactory to all concerned.[176]

F. W. Green was strongly of the opinion that the S.G.G.A. executive should name the two farmers' representatives on the Elevator Commission. The recent uproar at Prince Albert was no doubt still very much on his mind and he was, Scott believed, "fearful of accepting appointment, -- afraid, I suppose, that his position in the Executive might be weakened." To mollify Green, and perhaps the S.G.G.A. as well, Scott suggested that its executive be asked to ratify the two appointments.[177] This was accomplished early in March[178] and the Commission began its work in earnest.

The Elevator Commission conducted public hearings throughout the province and at one session received a memorandum from the S.G.G.A. outlining the views of that organization on the question of government elevators.[179] Magill and his colleagues also visited the grain marketing centres of Winnipeg, Minneapolis, Kansas City and Chicago, and in late August began the preparation of their report.[180] Two months later Magill reported to Scott that the work was nearly completed and that the findings and recommendations of the Commission were unanimous. These he summed up in two short sentences:

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[176] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. H. V. Bulyea, 29 December 1909, p. 39938.

[177] *Ibid.*, Scott to G. Langley, 28 February 1910, p. 40453.

[178] *Leader*, 4 March, 1910.

> We report *against* all schemes of public ownership, whether provincial, muncipal or district. We are in favour of a loan by the province to a cooperative company.[181]

Premier Scott was obviously pleased with the work of the Commission for he wrote to Magill:

> I want to say to you most heartily and sincerely that I never imagined it would be in the power of any person residing as far from Saskatchewan as is Nova Scotia to perform services for this Province of a kind to place me under such a debt of gratitude as you have done ... The simple truth is that you have saved us from the danger of being forced into a course pointing to dissatisfaction and disaster. The unanimous recommendation from a Commission which we were asked by the Grain Growers to appoint and the personnel of which was officially approved by the Grain Growers' Executive places the Government in a comparatively safe position.[182]

The two farmer members of the Commission were concerned that their report be accepted by the S.G.G.A. executive. Premier

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[179] *Grain Growers' Guide* [hereafter cited as *Guide*], 22 June 1910.

[180] *Leader*, 25 August 1910.

[181] AS, Walter Scott Papers, R. Magill to Scott, n.d. [October, 1910], p. 40489. (Emphasis in original.)

[182] *Ibid.*, Scott to R. Magill, 28 October 1910, pp. 40491-92.

Scott arranged to have the single copy of the report sent to Saskatoon where, by coincidence, the executive were meeting on 15 November. He further decided that until the executive had a chance to examine the report it would not be made public.[183] The report was received "on the whole favorably" in Saskatoon, to the great relief of Langley and Green.[184]

A summary of the lengthy report of the Elevator Commission then appeared in many Saskatchewan newspapers and in the *Grain Growers' Guide,* the official organ of the S.G.G.A. and other western farm organizations. The report considered and rejected in turn all of the various elevator schemes which had been proposed to the Commission, including municipal and district elevators, the proposal of the S.G.G.A. and the system of government elevators which Premier Roblin had introduced in Manitoba. The Commission instead recommended in favour of a system of co-operative elevators owned and operated by the farmers and assisted by generous government loans, and outlined a basis of organization for such a province-wide co-operative elevator company. The report further suggested that the executive of the S.G.G.A. constitute the provisional directorate of the company.[185]

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[183] *Ibid.*, F. W. Green to Scott, 4 November 1910, p. 40506; Scott to R. Magill, 8 November 1910, p. 40495; Scott to G. Langley, 8 November 1910, pp. 40509-10.

[184] *Ibid.*, G. Langley to Scott, 21 November 1910, p. 40513.

[185] Saskatchewan, *Report of the Elevator Commission* (Regina: Government Printer, 1910.)

The public response to the report was generally favourable,[186] except among some Conservatives. In speeches at Kamsack and later in Saskatoon, where John Evans, an S.G.G.A. director, had been nominated as the Provincial Rights candidate, Haultain and A. B. Gillis reaffirmed their support for a system of government-owned and operated elevators.[187] Premier Scott therefore expected that his opponents would criticize the work of the Elevator Commission, but in fact he found them "... as silent as Sphinxes about the Report."[188] Even the Conservative press was at first silent, but early in January the Saskatoon *Capital* began to criticize the recommendations of the Elevator Commission as unsatisfactory. This theme was taken up by the Regina *Province*, and the two predicted that the farmers would never accept such an inadequate solution to their grain marketing problems.[189] When the Legislature resumed its work in mid-January, Haultain would say only that he and his colleagues were prepared to meet the government half-way in an honest and sincere effort to provide an elevator system for Saskatchewan farmers.[190]

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[186] *Leader*, 16 November 1910; *Guide*, 30 November 1910.

[187] *Evening Capital* (Saskatoon) [hereafter cited as *Capital*], 26 October 1910, 3 November 1910.

[188] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. Langley, 26 November 1910, p. 40515.

[189] *Capital*, 20 January 1911, 23 January 1911; *Daily Province* (Regina) [hereafter cited as *Province*], 6 February 1911.

[190] *Leader*, 18 January 1911.

Premier Scott presented the elevator bill to the Legislature on 7 February 1911. He showed in a lengthy speech how the recommendations of the Elevator Commission had been embodied in the measure, and how the system of co-operative elevators would succeed where the system of government elevators established in Manitoba had apparently failed.[191] The next day Haultain rose to reply for the Opposition, aware that as he spoke the government's draft bill was also being considered at the S.G.G.A. convention then meeting in Regina.[192] He may have anticipated, as the Conservative newspapers in Regina and Saskatoon apparently did, that the farmers would reject the co-operative elevator scheme and insist on government ownership, or he may have felt obliged to defend the elevator scheme established by the Conservatives in Manitoba. Whatever the case, Haultain made it clear that he was unalterably opposed to the elevator bill. He criticized the Elevator Commission and the Liberals for rejecting out of hand the system of government elevators introduced by the Conservatives in Manitoba, and announced that he was now more convinced than ever that public ownership was the right course.[193]

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[191] *Ibid.*, 8 February 1911. Two weeks before D. W. McCuaig, Chairman of the Manitoba Elevator Commission, had outlined to the Manitoba Grain Growers' Association convention the financial difficulties which the government elevator system had encountered during its first year of operation. (*Guide*, 1 February 1911.)

[192] Copies of the report of the Elevator Commission had been mailed to every paid-up member of the farmers' organization, and copies of the government's draft bill were distributed to delegates at the S.G.G.A. convention. (*Guide*, 1 February 1911, 22 February 1911.)

Later that evening the 400 delegates attending the "farmers' parliament" concluded a day of spirited debate by unanimously endorsing the scheme of co-operative elevators with government assistance which the Elevator Commission had recommended and which the Liberals proposed to implement in the legislation then before the House.[194] The Regina *Province* was furious, and in a series of editorials the newspaper bitterly denounced the S.G.G.A. and its leaders for rejecting government ownership in favour of an unworkable scheme.[195] When Haultain resumed the debate on the elevator bill he declared that he would continue to press for government ownership. The system of elevators which the Liberals proposed to establish would be little more than "glorified farmers' elevators", a chain that would only be as strong as its weakest link. The Opposition would make the question a party issue, Haultain declared. His party was committed to government ownership on principle, and he promised that at the first opportunity he would introduce such a measure in the Legislature.[196] The pledge caused the Liberals no anxiety. "You know the real sentiment of the people of the Province even better than I do," Premier Scott wrote to the chairman of the Elevator Commission,

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[193] *Leader*, 9 February 1911.

[194] AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1911, pp. 15-30.

[195] *Province*, 7 February 1911, 9 February 1911, 13 February 1911.

[196] *Leader*, 10-11 February 1911.

> and I am sure you will agree with me that a plebiscite taken now on the issue as between the co-operative solution and any plan of Government elevators would result in an overwhelming defeat for the latter .... If the two proposals were placed before the people I am sincere in doubting whether Government elevators would obtain the approval of two hundred men in the whole Province. Not a single business man would be found to approve Government elevators and I do not believe that now one farmer in fifty would take Government elevators in preference to our scheme. Now when I tell you that Haultain has jockeyed himself into a position of direct hostility to our scheme, --- into a position necessitating the presenting of the square issue to the people whenever our next elections are held, --- a position in which he will stand for abolishing our scheme if he is elected and for thereafter immediately providing Government elevators, --- I am sure you will comprehend what I mean when I state that ... we are now in clover ... and it is Haultain who is enjoying the sensation of political shivers.[197]

It fell to W. R. Motherwell to answer Haultain's criticisms of the government's bill. Local farmers' elevators had invariably failed because they were isolated, he told the Legislature, but the bill now before the House would create a series of strong links welded into a strong chain. The central organization of the proposed farmers' company was "the very crux of the bill," he declared, "the feature which made it preferable in the farmers' eyes to the ordinary farmers' elevators." Haultain's plan would require an absolute monopoly of storage facilities to make it financially secure, and this would involve a large initial capitalization and the purchase of many unprofitable and useless elevators.

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[197] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to R. Magill, 23 February 1911, p. 40566.

A system of co-operative elevators, on the other hand, would be free from political influence, would leave the credit of the province unimpaired, and would give full control to the farmers. It would enjoy the financial support of those who would benefit from it, and would return all profits to the producer.[198]

On 17 February 1911 F. C. Tate moved an amendment to the motion for second reading stating that the bill did not provide adequate relief for the farmer and that a system of government elevators offered the only effective solution of his grain marketing problems.[199] This attempt to block the legislation was a futile exercise. The S.G.G.A., which by this time represented more than 10,000 of the province's 96,000 farmers, had endorsed the bill. As Robert Magill observed from Halifax, this "knocked out any solid basis for oppostion."[200] The Provincial Rights party apparently came to a similar conclusion for on 1 March, as the debate neared an end, its leader adopted a more conciliatory attitude. Haultain announced that his party would "accept the bill not as something they believed the farmers wanted, but as something which was aimed at removing evils under which the farmers suffered." Premier Scott declared, in the final speech of the debate, that he was confident the co-operative elevator scheme would be a success, for it had the support of the S.G.G.A. Second reading of the bill was then carried unanimously after the longest debate in the history of the province to that time.[201]

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[198] *Leader*, 15 February 1911.

[199] *Journals*, 1910-1911, p. 80.

[200] AS, Walter Scott Papers, R. Magill to Scott, 27 February 1911, p. 40572. The membership of the S.G.G.A. had tripled between 1909 and 1911, from 3,136 to 10,000. By the latter year there were 96,372 farms in the province. (*Guide*, 15 February 1911; *Fifth Census of Canada*, Vol. IV, p. 45.)

In committee stage a number of amendments were made to the bill. The most important of these enlarged the powers of the company "to do all things incidental to the *production,* storing and marketing of grain", thereby enabling it not only to engage in the merchandising and warehousing of grain and to operate terminal and country elevators, but to trade in farm supplies as well. The bill received third reading on 14 March and was proclaimed at once.[202]

The act authorized the provisional directors of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, as it was called, to take subscriptions for shares of $50 from farmers. Locals were to be established at the request of farmers at any railway shipping point in the province, provided that the amount of shares subscribed by supporters of the local was at least equal to the cost of the proposed elevator, that 15 per cent of the amount of such shares had been paid up and that the total crop acreage of the shareholders concerned amounted to at least 2,000 acres for each 10,000 bushels of elevator capacity requested. When 15 per cent of the necessary stock subscribed by a local had been paid up the government might loan to the Company a sum equal to 85 per cent of the estimated cost of constructing, acquiring or remodelling the desired elevator. The government's security was provided for by its control over the amount of the Company's capital stock and by the government's right as first mortgagee upon the Company's elevator properties.[203]

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[201] *Leader,* 2 March 1911.

[202] *Ibid.,* 14 March 1911; *Journals,* 1910-1911, pp. 115-16. (Italics mine.)

The provisional Board of Directors immediately began the work of organization that was necessary before the Company could actually begin operations.[204] Requests for locals were numerous, but the poor crop of the preceding season made it difficult for many farmers to pay the necessary amount of subscribed stock. In spite of this, twenty-five locals were organized by 12 June 1911, and the provisional directorate called the first general meeting for 6 July. Between the time of the calling of the meeting and the meeting itself, twenty-one more locals were organized, and all were represented at the first general meeting in Moose Jaw. The delegates first approved the by-laws of the new company, and then turned to the election of officers. J. A. Maharg, president of the S.G.G.A. became president of the Saskatchewan "Co-op" as well, and George Langley and C. A. Dunning, both S.G.G.A. directors, became vice-president and secretary-treasurer, respectively.[205]

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[203] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 1 Geo. V, Chapter 39.

[204] Section 7 of the Act provided that the Company could not begin operations until at least twenty-five locals had been established.

What the future might hold for this new enterprise only time would tell. It was, as J. A. Calder admitted in the Legislature, very much "an experiment",[206] but it was an experiment launched under most favourable circumstances. With capable management to direct its affairs, and with the support of the government and farmers of the province, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company began the business of handling and marketing Saskatchewan's staple crop.

In retrospect, the "elevator issue" can be seen as the beginning of the alienation of Haultain and the Provincial Rights party from the farmers of the province. It was the Liberals who acquired the reputation of being a "farmers' party" in all but name, but the claim was not as secure in 1911 as it would later become. In the 1908 provincial election the Provincial Rights party had made a special effort to nominate farmers as candidates, and some members of the S.G.G.A. executive were known to be supporters of Haultain, among them F. C. Tate, an S.G.G.A. director and Provincial Rights M.L.A. for Lumsden, and John Evans.[207] Haultain miscalculated the strength of public ownership sentiment within the

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[205] *Guide*, 19 July 1911, 6 December 1911.

[206] *Leader*, 22 March 1911.

[207] AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1911, p. 4. Evans, like Tate, was an S.G.G.A. director and had recently, of course, been nominated as the Provincial Rights candidate in Saskatoon County. (*Supra*, p. 153.)

S.G.G.A. It was to prove a serious blunder so far as his own political career was concerned, yet he might have been able to repair the damage in time. Almost at once, though, he found himself on the wrong side of another issue -- free trade with the United States -- and this was to doom him forever in the farmers' eyes.

CHAPTER III

RECIPROCITY AND WIDER MARKETS, 1911-1914

On 26 January 1911 W. S. Fielding, Minister of Finance in the Laurier government, announced to Parliament and the nation that a comprehensive trade agreement had been concluded with the United States. The negotiations had been going on for some months, and the terms of the agreement -- free entry of most natural products of each country into the other, and reductions in the duty on agricultural implements and some other manufactured articles -- brought jubilation to the government benches. An agreement providing for freer trade with the United States seemed the fitting climax to the fifteen years of prosperity which the country had enjoyed under Liberal rule.[1] Among Conservatives, R. L. Borden was later to recall, "... there was the deepest dejection ... and many of our members were confident that the Government's proposals would appeal to the country and would give it another term of office."[2]

Nowhere did Fielding's announcement receive a more enthusiastic reception than in Saskatchewan. Laurier had discovered at first hand the strength of low tariff sentiment in the province during his western tour the previous summer.[3] Now party distinctions were forgotten in Saskatchewan as Liberal and Conservative newspaper editors alike praised the trade agreement.[4] The S.G.G.A. and the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Municipalities endorsed it at their annual conventions in February and March, and boards of trade in cities and towns across the province joined in the chorus of approval.[5]

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[1] Skelton, Vol. II, pp. 369-70. The background to the reciprocity negotiations and the negotiations themselves are described in greater detail in L. E. Ellis, *Reciprocity 1911: A Study in Canadian American Relations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1939), pp. 11-71.

[2] Borden, Vol. I, p. 303.

Business, financial and manufacturing interests in Montreal and Toronto took a very different view. In February a group of eighteen Toronto Liberals issued a manifesto in which they warned that it would imperil the east-west trade upon which the Canadian economy was based. Other prominent Liberals, including Clifford Sifton, also denounced the agreement and the Conservatives, no longer dismayed by the apparent popularity of reciprocity, began a vigorous campaign against it. In the House of Commons and in the press they argued that reciprocity would destroy interprovincial trade and threaten the livelihood of farmers, ranchers and other producers who would be forced to compete with cheaper American imports. Opponents of the reciprocity agreement also claimed that it would weaken trade and other ties with Great Britain, and might eventually lead to the absorption of Canada by the United States.[6]

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[3] See, for example, the petition presented to Laurier by the executive of the S.G.G.A. on 1 August 1910. (PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, pp. 172841-47.)

[4] *Leader*, 27 January 1911; *Progress* (Qu'Appelle), 2 February 1911; *Grenfell Sun*, 16 February 1911.

[5] *Leader*, 10 February 1911, 18 March 1911; *Capital*, 17 March 1911; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Fillmore Board of Trade to Laurier, 14 March 1911, p. 183196; Regina Board of Trade to Laurier, 8 April 1911, p. 184511.

The Saskatchewan Legislature debated the merits of the reciprocity agreement early in March. A Liberal back-bencher introduced a lengthy resolution approving its terms and demanding an extension of the British preference, but it was a member of the Opposition who best expressed the sentiment of the House on the question. F. W. G. Haultain declared that he had approved of the terms when the agreement was first made public in January, and nothing had happened since then to change his mind. He believed that it was the "inevitable destiny" of Saskatchewan to become the largest food producer on the continent. The United States was rapidly ceasing to be an exporting country, especially in foodstuffs, and the agreement would give Saskatchewan farmers access to a market which would become more and more valuable in the future. Saskatchewan farmers would also benefit from the reduction in the duties on agricultural implements, but it was the prospect of the wider market which most appealed to him.

Haultain dismissed the fears of annexation which some opponents of reciprocity had already raised. He believed as strongly as anyone in the value of the British connection, and he was even prepared to sacrifice tariff concessions if that were necessary to preserve his British birthright. Many American farmers had already settled in the west, and he hoped more would follow. These settlers had not come with any thought of annexation, and they posed no threat to the British character of the country. In fact they appreciated the wider freedom and the greater respect for law and order which they found in Canada. He could not accept the argument that increased trade with the United States would draw Canadians away from their British traditions. "We out here are just as well able as magnates in the east ... to decide what is patriotic or unpatriotic ....", he declared. "I am not prepared to sit at the feet of any of these eastern Gamaliels and study loyalty." Reciprocity would benefit the west, and would not injure any other section of the country. Was not Ontario equally interested with Saskatchewan and the other provinces in seeing the west populated and prosperous? If the agreement did not prove to be as satisfactory as hoped for, then it would be an easy matter to change or abrogate it, and this was another reason for trying the experiment. The Leader of the Opposition was greeted with thunderous applause from both sides of the House when he finished his speech, and the members unanimously endorsed the reciprocity agreement.[7]

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[6] Skelton, Vol. II, pp. 367-77; Borden, Vol. I, pp. 302-14; Dafoe, pp. 363-68; Ellis, pp. 75-82, 141-60.

All Saskatchewan, it seemed, welcomed the prospect of a wider market for its agricultural products and lower prices for farm implements. And well it might, for by 1911 Saskatchewan led all other provinces or states in Canada and the United States in the production of wheat and other cereal crops.[8] Predictions that wheat would one day make Saskatchewan "... a province of big cities and prosperous merchants and manufacturers -- a very hive of business and industry" were common fare in the newspapers of Regina and Saskatoon during this era of western "boosterism."[9] The Dominion census then underway would place Saskatchewan third among Canada's nine provinces in terms of population, a position it would continue to hold for forty years, but in 1911 Saskatchewan was still very much a province of farms and small towns. No one city had risen to a position of dominance, as Winnipeg had in Manitoba. In 1911 only 13 per cent of Saskatchewan's 492,432 residents lived in Regina, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Prince Albert.[10] There was as yet little to differentiate town from city in Saskatchewan, so closely were their economic fortunes tied to the price and yield of the mammoth wheat crops for which the province had become famous, but this did not dim the optimism of those who foresaw a greater destiny for their chosen community.

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[7] *Leader*, 9 March 1911.

Regina continued to maintain a comfortable lead over its various rivals during these years. No longer the rude prairie town of Territorial days, Regina had become the largest and busiest city in the province. Its area had increased four-fold and its population thirteen-fold since the turn of the century, from 2,249 to 30,213. South of Wascana Creek in "Lakeview" three local real estate promoters, W. H. A. Hill, E. A. McCallum and E. D. McCallum, had purchased 14,000 acres of farmland and were busy subdividing it into choice residential lots. The building of the Grand Trunk Pacific shops north of the city was drawing railway workers, tradesmen and office employees to the more modest residential districts of northwest Regina. Most major banks and trust and insurance companies established their provincial head offices in Regina, and by 1911 more than one hundred wholesale firms had located in the "Queen City", making it, in the words of the local board of trade, "The Undisputed Business Centre of the Wheat Fields of Canada." The handsome new Legislative Buildings on Albert Street were nearing completion, and workmen were laying the track for the city's municipally-owned "street railway", the first of its kind in the province.[11]

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[8] *Agriculture Report*, 1911, pp. 48-49.

[9] *Leader*, 23 February 1907. Similar expressions of opinion may be found in *Standard*, 11 May 1908; *Capital*, 28 September 1909, 25 October 1911; *Leader*, 19 October 1911.

[10] *Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, Vol. I, p. *v*.

Moose Jaw, with its sprawling C.P.R. shops and marshalling yards, was the second largest city in the province, with a population of 13,823. Close behind was Saskatoon, a hamlet in 1901 but a bustling city of more than 12,000 in 1911. The rapid influx of settlers into central Saskatchewan in the wake of the construction of the two new transcontinental railways made Saskatoon the main commercial centre for a trading area of some 40,000 square miles, and the location of the provincial university in that city gave a further impetus to its development.[12] Prince Albert, Saskatchewan's fourth and smallest city in 1911, had not become a great railway centre like its southern rival, Saskatoon, and derived little benefit from the agricultural prosperity which the rest of the province was enjoying. Instead, Prince Albert businessmen had begun to exploit the natural wealth of Saskatchewan's northern hinterland. The lumbering industry, for example, employed 2,000 men by 1909 and lumber output at Prince Albert had reached 50,000,000 feet, worth almost $1,000,000.[13] In 1910 the city embarked on a scheme to harness the nearby La Colle Falls, in the confident expectation that cheap electric power would attract industrial development and make the "White Coal City" a major manufacturing centre.[14]

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 549; Drake, pp. 109-11, 119, 135, 139-40; *Regina. The Queen City of the Middle West. The Undisputed Business Centre of the Wheat Fields of Canada* (Regina: Regina Board of Trade, 1911).

Saskatchewan Liberals were naturally pleased with the unanimity of the vote in the Legislature in favour of the proposed trade agreement with the United States. Premier Scott at once wired Laurier that "... such expression rightly interprets sentiments of people of Saskatchewan."[15] Yet even in this province opposition to reciprocity was slowly beginning to appear. A week after the debate in the Legislature D. D. Ellis, Provincial Grand Master of the Orange Lodge, denounced the agreement in his address to the Order's annual convention in Saskatoon. Reciprocity with the United States would lead to annexation, and he appealed to all true Canadians to rise above party and strengthen the bonds with the mother country.[16]

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[12] Archer, pp. 126, 146, 150-51.

[13] G. W. D. Abrams, *Prince Albert: The First Century, 1866-1966* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1966), pp. 142-57.

[14] The history of the ill-fated La Colle Falls hydro-electric project is described in detail in *ibid.*, pp. 164-75, 183-216.

The strongest criticism of reciprocity came from the editorial columns of the Saskatoon *Capital* and the Regina *Province*. These newspapers warned that the free entry of wheat into the United States would destroy forever the hope of western cities such as Saskatoon and Moose Jaw of becoming important flour milling centres:

> Thus the one single industry which might reasonably be expected to flourish in western Canada will receive a death-blow ... and the army of workers which should fill our Western Canadian cities [will] make their homes across the border.[17]

Reciprocity would also destroy the wholesale distributing trade upon which the prosperity of these communities was so largely based. The American railways that carried Saskatchewan wheat to be milled in

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[15] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to Wilfrid Laurier, 8 March 1911, pp. 50506-507.

[16] *Capital*, 15 March 1911.

[17] *Ibid.*, 28 January 1911.

Minneapolis could be expected to lower their freight rates to generate a return traffic, and the prairies would come to be served by American wholesalers.[18] The vast American market would prove to be of little benefit to Canadian farmers and ranchers. They would face stiff competition not only in the United States but also in the home market, which, under the reciprocity agreement, would be thrown open to American producers and American trusts.[19]

These developments placed Haultain and his Provincial Rights colleagues in a difficult position. They had publicly endorsed reciprocity with the United States, yet most of them, including Haultain, were known to be Conservatives in federal politics. R. L. Borden was waging a determined campaign in Ottawa against the trade agreement, and the chief Conservative newspapers in Saskatchewan were also opposed to it. Rumours began to circulate that Haultain was under pressure from the Conservative party to renounce his vote in the Legislature.[20] The Provincial Rights leader had claimed in the past that he placed the interests of Saskatchewan ahead of those of any federal party. Would the pressures of federal party loyalty now prove too strong for Haultain and the others to resist? This was the dilemma which confronted them in the summer of 1911.

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[18] *Ibid.*, 17-18 February 1911, 3 March 1911, 10 March 1911.

[19] *Province*, 21 April 1911, 26 April 1911.

[20] *Leader*, 1 June 1911; *Capital*, 8 June 1911; QUA, G. F. Chipman Papers, T. A. Crerar to Chipman, 5 June 1911.

R. L. Borden began a tour of the prairie provinces in mid-June. He repeated the Conservative arguments against reciprocity, but he also declared that his party favoured government ownership and operation of the Hudson Bay railway and terminal elevators, and the transfer of western lands and natural resources to provincial control. The Conservative leader spoke at Maple Creek on 23 June, and at the conclusion of his remarks D. J. Wylie, the local Provincial Rights member, announced that he was no longer in favour of the reciprocity agreement. Borden spoke at Prince Albert on 1 July, and there S. J. Donaldson, another Provincial Rights member, announced that he too was now opposed to free trade with the United States.[21] A week later the Saskatchewan Conservative Association met in convention at Moose Jaw and approved an anti-reciprocity resolution without a single dissenting voice, notwithstanding the fact that the leader of the Provincial Rights party and several of his colleagues were present at the meeting. Haultain apparently took no part in the proceedings, and refused to accept the position of honorary vice-president of the federal party association.[22]

Reciprocity was not the only matter discussed at the Moose Jaw convention. It will be remembered that the decision in

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[21] *Leader*, 24 June 1911, 3 July 1911.

[22] *Province*, 8 July 1911; *Standard*, 8 July 1911.

1905 to organize a Provincial Rights party had met with some opposition from Conservatives who wished to contest the first Saskatchewan election on federal party lines. The question was apparently raised again at a second convention of Conservative supporters in December 1908, but no action was taken at that time. Now, three years later, the delegates approved a resolution which recommended that the Provincial Rights and Conservative parties be united under one organization to secure provincial control of the lands and natural resources in Saskatchewan.[23] Such a union would be contrary to Haultain's long-expressed belief that federal party names and divisions had no place in provincial politics, yet neither he nor any of his colleagues apparently spoke out against the resolution.

The position of the Provincial Rights party on the reciprocity issue became even more confused after the Laurier government dissolved Parliament on 29 July and appealed to the electorate. At first Haultain announced that he would take no part in the contest.[24] Then, early in September, he changed his mind and addressed a series of meetings for R. S. Lake, the Conservative M.P. for Qu'Appelle. Speaking at Francis and later at Indian Head, Haultain declared that he could no longer support the reciprocity agreement. It was not a step toward tariff reform, and it would not provide any substantial benefit for Saskatchewan farmers.[25] F. C. Tate, another Provincial Rights M.L.A. and director of the S.G.G.A., was at the same time actively campaigning for Richard Fletcher, an independent farmers' candidate who was contesting the Regina seat on a platform of freer trade with the United States and Great Britain.[26] The Regina *Standard*, a newspaper which had supported Haultain and his party in the past, endorsed the reciprocity agreement and appealed to farmers to elect Fletcher on 21 September.[27]

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[23] *Standard*, 7 July 1911; *Province*, 8 July 1911.

[24] *Leader*, 5 August 1911.

The Liberals were confident of sweeping the province on the trade issue, for, as Premier Scott pointed out, "ninety per cent or more of our people are naturally favourable to Reciprocity."[28] Nine of the ten seats in Saskatchewan had returned supporters of the Laurier government in the previous election, and in 1911 the Liberals again won every seat but one. R. S. Lake, the Conservative who had represented Qu'Appelle since 1904, was defeated by 424 votes, and the Liberals lost Prince Albert by only

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[25] *Province*, 6-7 September 1911.

[26] *Standard*, 7 September 1911.

[27] *Ibid.*, 23 June 1911, 14 August 1911, 5 September 1911.

[28] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. Thomson, 18 August 1911, p. 37629.

355 votes.[29] The cities of Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and Prince Albert all gave majorities to the Conservative candidates, but except in Prince Albert these majorities were offset by the Liberal vote in the country districts, and the Liberal was elected.[30] In almost every other province the Liberals lost ground, and the Laurier government suffered an overwhelming defeat.[31] For the first time since 1896 the Conservatives again occupied the seats of power in Ottawa.

Saskatchewan Conservatives were delighted with Borden's victory despite the poor showing of the party's candidates in that province. Control of federal patronage would henceforth rest in Conservative rather than Liberal hands, and under these circumstances, the Regina *Province* and Saskatoon *Capital* boasted, the Scott government was doomed to defeat.[32] The next provincial election might come at any time, Haultain told a meeting of party supporters in Regina. They would not again be caught by surprise as had happened in 1908, for it was important to capture the local government so that Saskatchewan Conservatives might assist Borden in a more substantial way in the next federal contest.[33]

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[29] *Directory of Members of Parliament and Federal Elections for the North-West Territories and Saskatchewan, 1887-1966* [hereafter cited as *Directory of Federal Elections*] (Regina: Saskatchewan Archives Board, 1967), pp. 28-47.

[30] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, J. L. Archibald to Borden, 22 September 1911, p. 77670; G. E. Foster Papers, G. P. Bliss to Foster, 25 September 1911; J. S. Willison Papers, W. G. Cates to Willison, 13 October 1911, p. 5089; Canada, *Sessional Papers*, Session 1911-1912, No. 18, *Return of the Twelfth General Election for the House of Commons of Canada Held on the 14th and 21st of September 1911* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1912), pp. 429-59.

[31] Skelton, Vol. II, pp. 380-81.

[32] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, A. B. Gillis to Borden, 22 September 1911, p. 77625; G. E. Foster Papers, W. B. Willoughby to Foster, 23 September 1911; *Province*, 29 September 1911; *Capital*, 30 September 1911.

Premier Scott denied all rumours that he intended to call a "snap" election.[34] In fact, he admitted privately, it would be a mistake for the Liberals to dissolve the Legislature while their opponents were on such a "keen edge" as a result of the federal victory. If the situation were handled properly, the fact that a Conservative government was now in power at Ottawa would make the Liberals even stronger in Saskatchewan:

> I am inclined to think we shall hear very little more from our Opposition about Provincial rights; the boot in this respect will be entirely on the other foot and there will be made evident a thorough alliance between the Ottawa and Regina Tories beyond anything of which we were ever suspected.[35]

The Liberals were also confident that Haultain's changed attitude on the reciprocity issue had lost him a great deal of support, particularly among the farmers of the province.[36] These two assumptions influenced Liberal political strategy as Scott and his colleagues prepared for the next provincial election.

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[33] *Province*, 30 September 1911.

[34] *Leader*, 4 October 1911.

[35] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to E. Fearon, 30 September 1911, p. 47483.

[36] *Ibid.*, Scott to J. R. Long, 27 October 1911, p. 50248; W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to J. Moir, 31 October 1911, p. 5481.

Both parties worked to complete the nomination of candidates and perfect their organizations. W. D. Cowan, president of the Saskatchewan Conservative Association, declared in a newspaper interview that his party would be ready whenever Premier Scott decided to call an election:

> We have an absolutely united party in [the] province now, and with the spirit now existing amongst them it ensures the keenest fight ever known in Saskatchewan, and undoubted success for the provincial Conservatives.[37]

Local Liberal conventions passed resolutions demanding lower tariffs and wider markets for Saskatchewan producers, and Liberal speakers criticized Haultain for working to bring about the defeat of reciprocity after he had publicly endorsed the agreement in the Legislature.[38]

The Liberals continued to prepare the ground for an election during the session of the Legislature which began on 25 January 1912. Ill health prevented Walter Scott from taking part, and J. A. Calder assumed the responsibility of leading the government.[39]

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[37] *Province*, 24 October 1911.

[38] *Leader*, 7-8 December 1911, 15 December 1911.

[39] *Ibid.*, 26 January 1912. Calder explained to the members, assembled for the first time in the chamber of the new Legislative Buildings, that the Premier had developed a severe cold in December, and was advised by his doctors to leave the province during the winter if he wished to avoid another bout of pneumonia.

Scott also suffered from nervous tension which at times

The legislative programme outlined in the Speech from the Throne was not a heavy one, and the debate during the six-week session was conducted largely with an eye to party advantage. On 5 February, for instance, a government back-bencher introduced a resolution censuring those M.L.A.'s who had endorsed the reciprocity agreement and then campaigned against it in the recent federal election, and declaring that the Legislature still approved of free trade with the United States. Liberal speakers attacked their opponents for betraying the farmers and sacrificing the interests of Saskatchewan at the command of Borden and the large eastern corporations. This Haultain emphatically denied. He had initially favoured the agreement because he believed it would benefit Saskatchewan, but on taking a broader view he had reached the conclusion that reciprocity would not be in the best interests of Canada. In any event the matter was now settled, and no resolution of the Legislature could bring the reciprocity agreement into effect. Haultain and his colleagues accused the government of introducing the resolution strictly for partisan reasons, so that reciprocity might be made an issue in the coming provincial election.[40] J. A. Calder wound up the acrimonious four-day debate with the suggestion that the

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made it difficult for him to sleep. In 1911 some of his colleagues had become concerned that the Premier was approaching a nervous breakdown. (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to R. Magill, 18 March 1911, p. 40585.) If this was a further reason for Scott's absence from the province, it was not mentioned at the time.

[40] *Leader,* 6-8 February 1912.

the portion of the resolution which constituted a censure of some members of the House be deleted. The amended resolution, which stated simply

> that this House reaffirms its adherence to the policy embodied in the ... proposed reciprocal trade arrangement between Canada and the United States and is of the opinion that every effort should continue to be made to secure to the people of Saskatchewan the benefits contained in the said trade agreement,

✓ was carried by a vote of 27-12, with two Provincial Rights members, F. C. Tate and G. B. Johnston, voting with the Liberals.[41]

R. L. Borden's pledge to transfer control of the public domain to the prairie provinces was made the subject of another lengthy debate later in the session. In March 1911 members on both sides of the House had joined in requesting that the vast northern hinterland of Saskatchewan and the grazing and other lands not required for settlement purposes be transferred to the province,[42] but Laurier had not acted upon this request before he dissolved Parliament. The provincial Liberals wasted little time in writing to the new Prime Minister after the election to demand that he honour his pledge. Borden replied that he could not agree to an immediate conference between the Regina and Ottawa governments because of the pressure of other business. J. A. Calder tabled this correspondence in the Legislature, and after a four-day debate the members unanimously endorsed a resolution demanding the immediate transfer to Saskatchewan of its public domain, and compensation for all lands and other natural resources disposed of for federal purposes.[43]

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[41] *Ibid.*, 9 February 1912; *Journals*, 1912, pp. 30-31.

[42] *Journals*, 1910-1911, pp. 124-26.

During this same session the Liberals introduced a bill to increase the membership of the Legislative Assembly from forty-one to fifty-four. It was accepted with little criticism, even from Haultain and his colleagues.[44] J. A. Calder announced in his budget address that the government intended to spend $5,000,000 on a "good roads" programme during the next five years,[45] and the necessary legislation was quickly approved. The act established a Board of Highway Commissioners which, with the assistance of representatives of the rural and urban municipalities, was to oversee the construction and maintenance of a system of main highways throughout Saskatchewan.[46]

Another measure, setting up a new hail insurance scheme, also won ready acceptance from both sides of the House. Alarming deficits in 1907 and 1908 had prompted the Liberals to abandon the government hail insurance scheme inherited from the North-West

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[43] *Leader,* 13 February 1912, 8 March 1912, 12 March 1912, 14-15 March 1912; *Journals,* 1912, p. 144.

[44] Saskatchewan, *Statutes,* 2 Geo. V, Chapter 2.

[45] *Leader,* 9 March 1912.

[46] Saskatchewan, *Statutes,* 2 Geo. V, Chapter 7.

Territories. The legislation had been repealed in 1909 and the hail insurance field thrown open to private companies, much to the dissatisfaction of Saskatchewan farmers.[47] The S.G.G.A. and the S.A.R.M. passed resolutions at their annual conventions in 1910 and 1911 urging the government to establish a compulsory provincial scheme financed by a universal land tax, but with the proviso that resident ratepayers be permitted to withdraw one section or less from the assessment and benefits.[48] The S.G.G.A. executive prepared a draft bill and presented it to the cabinet in October 1911[49] and it was this draft which formed the basis of the legislation which W. R. Motherwell presented to the House on 13 February 1912. The bill authorized any municipality which passed the necessary hail insurance by-law to levy a special tax upon all the lands within its jurisdiction, with the exception of grazing lands and urban property. With this revenue a Hail Insurance Commission composed of two members elected by the reeves of the participating municipalities and a third, the chairman, appointed by the government, would indemnify farmers for total or partial loss. The Commission could not begin operations until at least ten municipalities had agreed to participate in the scheme. Copies of the bill were distributed to delegates attending the S.G.G.A. convention in Regina, and the "farmers' parliament" endorsed the hail insurance measure by a nearly unanimous vote.[50] The legislation met little opposition in the House. Haultain declared that it was "... at least a well-intentioned effort to meet an unfortunate and urgent situation" and the bill passed easily with only minor changes.[51]

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[47] Hingley, pp. 5-7.

[48] *Guide,* 16 February 1910, 22 February 1911; *Leader,* 18 March 1910.

[49] *Guide,* 18 October 1911.

The same unanimity of opinion was apparent when the Legislature debated and approved two resolutions urging the government to investigate the feasibility of providing loans to farmers at a low rate of interest and cheap fuel and power to Saskatchewan consumers. The expansion of western agriculture since the mid-1890's had been financed largely with borrowed capital. Farmers obtained loans to purchase machinery, stock and lumber and other supplies, and borrowed more money to acquire additional land, provide working capital or consolidate past loans. The resulting mortgages, bank loans and indebtedness to local merchants and implement dealers made the farmer's financial postion highly vulnerable.[52] Farmers complained of the high interest rates charged by the banks and mortgage companies, and by 1911 there was a growing belief in Saskatchewan that its future agricultural development would depend upon the government using the credit of the province to provide low cost loans to farmers.[53]

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[50] *Leader,* 14 February 1912; AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Convention Reports,* 1912, pp. 24-25.

[51] *Leader,* 17 February 1912. In committee the members agreed to raise from ten to twenty-five the number of municipalities which would have to signify their desire to participate in the scheme before it would be inaugurated. (*Ibid.*, 29 February 1912.) In fact a total of 115 municipalities passed the necessary hail insurance by-law in 1912, and the Hail Insurance Commission commenced operations in March 1913. (Hingley, pp. 9-13.)

D. J. Wylie, the Conservative M.L.A. for Maple Creek who introduced the "cheap money" resolution, pointed to the success of a state-operated agricultural credit scheme in New Zealand where the government had loaned $20,000,000 to farmers and never lost a single dollar. George Langley voiced the sentiments of many Grain Growers when he declared that interest rates on farm loans in Saskatchewan, then averaging about 8.5 per cent, were far too high. The government could borrow money at a much lower rate than this. Through an independent commission it could then make loans for agricultural purposes, saving farmers perhaps as much as $700,000 a year in interest charges. All who took part in the debate were agreed that an investigation should be undertaken at once, and Wylie's motion was carried unanimously.[54]

It was another Conservative who first raised the question of public power in the Legislature. During the 1911 session F. W. G. Haultain had suggested that the government acquire coal lands and water power sites in the province, and pointed to the success of the Ontario Hydro-Electric Power Commission as an example of what might be accomplished in Saskatchewan. George Langley and another government speaker, George Bell of Estevan, had dismissed these suggestions as impractical, but it was Bell who moved the resolution asking for an inquiry the following year.[55] Developments in northern Saskatchewan may have persuaded the Liberals to take a more favourable view of Haultain's suggestions. With Prince Albert hoping to attract industrial development by offering cheap electric power generated at the La Colle Falls, the government may well have regarded an inquiry as a means whereby southern Saskatchewan might meet future competition from the north.[56] Whatever the reasons for the Liberals' changed attitude, Bell now proceeded to describe to the House the immense deposits of lignite coal in southern Saskatchewan and the experiments which had been conducted in North Dakota to produce lignite briquettes. Haultain endorsed the resolution on behalf of the Opposition, and predicted that the west would rapidly become a manufacturing as well as a grain producing country if cheap power were available. "We should employ the best available experts and get right to the bottom of the thing," Calder declared rather grandly in winding up the debate, "and if it is found that the lignite can be used to advantage as a power producer and a cheap fuel, the Government should own, control and operate any system which may be inaugurated."[57]

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[52] W. T. Easterbrook, *Farm Credit in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1938), pp. 43-53.

[53] See, for example, George Langley's address to the 1911 S.G.G.A. convention. (AS, Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1911, p. 26.)

[54] *Leader*, 7 March 1912; *Journals*, 1912, p. 105.

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[55] *Leader*, 16 February 1911; *Journals*, 1912, p. 21.

[56] C. O. White, "Saskatchewan Builds an Electrical System" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1968), pp. 60-61.

The Legislature prorogued on 15 March 1912. The government had come through the session "in good shape," Calder reported to Laurier, "and ... on the broad ground of policy we stand in a satisfactory position so far as our people are concerned."[58] Nevertheless Calder anticipated a strenuous fight whenever the next provincial election took place:

> Our opponents are active in a thousand different directions, every day bringing forth fresh evidence of the creation of an organization on an extensive scale. From appearances, the weight of their money is beginning to count and goodness knows where the end may be .... In my judgement the next battle in our province will be one of the bitterest ever fought in Canada.[59]

The Conservatives expected the election to come within three months,[60] and in a series of speeches in April and May Haultain outlined the platform on which his party would appeal for the support of Saskatchewan voters. He would not discuss reciprocity, because it was a federal and not a provincial matter. The most important issue in the coming election would be provincial control of the lands and resources of Saskatchewan. The Liberals had claimed in 1905 that the subsidy provided in lieu of provincial control would enable the province to remain forever free from debt. Now, seven years later, Saskatchewan had accumulated a debt of more than $8,500,000, and the provincial government was paying in interest charges almost as much as it received in compensation from Ottawa. Moreover, the Scott government had had to resort to direct taxation through the Supplementary Revenue Act. There would be no need for direct taxation if the province controlled its own resources, and Haultain pledged the Conservative party to demand the return of the public domain and compensation for all lands which had been alienated for federal purposes.

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[57] *Leader*, 3 February 1912.

[58] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, series P (8), Calder to Wilfrid Laurier, 19 March 1912.

[59] *Ibid.*, Calder to G. P. Graham, 20 March 1912.

[60] PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, W. G. Cates to Willison, 11 April 1912, p. 5093.

Haultain also attacked the Liberals for their failure to secure control of rates on railway lines assisted by the government. He announced that a Conservative administration would provide railways where they were required, by building government lines, acquiring existing lines or guaranteeing bonds, and would secure control of all freight and passenger rates on such lines. The Conservative leader also promised to integrate the rural telephone systems with the urban and long distance lines and operate both through an independent commission, make loans available to farmers at a low rate of interest and investigate the feasibility of harnessing the North and South Saskatchewan Rivers to provide cheap power.[61]

The Liberals were busy too. Though they gave no indication of when the contest might take place, the signs of their election preparations were unmistakable. On 6 April the government announced that the Board of Highway Commissioners would be authorized to spend more than $1,500,000 on road and bridge construction work in 1912, and during the month Liberal nominating conventions were held in those ridings which had not yet chosen candidates.[62] The continued absence of Premier Scott from the province led to speculation in the Conservative press that his illness was more serious than the Liberals were prepared to admit, and that he would shortly be forced to resign in favour of J. A. Calder.[63] Scott finally returned to the province in June and declared that he was fit and ready for the approaching contest.[64]

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[61] *Province*, 17 April 1912, 27 April 1912, 31 May 1912.

[62] *Leader*, 6 April 1912; AS, Walter Scott Papers, private secretary to J. A. Calder, 7 April 1912, pp. 39258-63, same to same, 12 April 1912, pp. 39264-65.

[63] *Province*, 26 April 1912, 24 May 1912, 27 May 1912. Such speculation was not entirely without foundation. Premier Scott was in Philadelphia, Frank Oliver reported to Laurier at the end of May, and according to J. A. Calder was "improving very much in health" though his stay in the Bahamas had not benefited him greatly. "Mr. Calder expected him to be present during the [provincial] elections but I do not expect any very great activity on his part." (PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, F. Oliver to Laurier, 30 May 1912, p. 190298.)

[64] *Leader*, 10 June 1912.

F. W. G. Haultain meanwhile continued his tour of the province. He spoke in Regina on 10 June and was joined on the platform by Robert Rogers and W. J. Roche, two members of the Borden cabinet. Rogers announced a number of changes in the homestead regulations and promised to rush the Hudson Bay railway to completion and to begin the construction of a large terminal elevator at Fort William. His colleague declared that while the Borden government believed the lands and resources of Saskatchewan rightly belonged to the province, it did not wish to force them upon an unwilling people. The best way to demonstrate that Saskatchewan wanted control of its public domain, Roche suggested, would be to vote for Haultain and a Conservative government at the next election.[65]

Premier Scott dissolved the Legislature five days later and appealed to the voters on the basis of his government's "safe and sane legislation ... splendid financial position and ... business-like administration of public affairs." If returned to office on 11 July he promised to investigate the best method of making loans available to farmers at a low rate of interest, and to provide cheap power to towns and cities in the province if such a scheme were found to be practicable.[66] In the weeks that followed Liberal speakers pointed to the achievements of the Scott government in assisting the farmers of Saskatchewan and claimed that the election was "... the second engagement in the struggle between the producers of Western Canada on the one hand and the Big Interests and Monopolies of Eastern Canada on the other."[67] Premier Scott declared in the opening speech of his campaign that reciprocity would not become a dead issue in the province as long as wheat production continued to increase at such a phenomenal rate. In a short time, perhaps next year or in five years, Saskatchewan farmers would need a larger market. Haultain, the great champion of provincial rights, had sacrificed the interests of his province by joining the federal Conservatives and the big corporations in opposition to the reciprocity agreement. The Liberals, on the other hand, were pledged to continue the fight for wider markets and lower tariffs until success was achieved.[68]

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[65] *Standard*, 11 June 1912.

[66] *Premier Scott's Address to the Electors of Saskatchewan. The Progressive Programme of a Progressive Government* (n.p., 1912?).

The Liberals also seized upon the scarcely veiled threat by a member of the Borden cabinet that Saskatchewan would not receive control of its lands and resources as long as the Scott government remained in power. This was "coercion of the most unblushing and brazen kind," the Premier charged.[69] It was the Liberals' turn to denounce federal interference in provincial affairs, much as Haultain had done in 1905, and they made the most of the opportunity. Never before, the Attorney General claimed in a speech at Nokomis, had a federal government interfered so openly and aggressively in a provincial election. Never before had a provincial political leader and his party acquiesced so completely in the attempted coercion of a province as had Haultain and the Conservatives.[70]

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[67] *Leader*, 17-18 June 1912, 25 June 1912; *Prairie News* (Govan), 21 June 1912.

[68] *Leader*, 18 June 1912.

[69] *Ibid.*

The Conservative press accused the government of importing election workers from Alberta and Manitoba,[71] and the Liberals in turn claimed that scores of homestead inspectors, Dominion police and other federal officials were swarming into the province to assist Haultain. Their names were circulated to all Liberal constituency organizations in Saskatchewan and party workers were warned to guard the polls on election day to prevent the intimidation of voters.[72] Three of these "election heelers", F. Shablowski, Marsh Jackson and William Shields, were arrested and charged with infractions of the Election Act, and the government appointed 350 special constables to ensure that the voting was conducted in an orderly fashion.[73] The Regina *Province* saw this as a thinly disguised Liberal plot to prevent an honest election, and advised Conservatives to use force if necessary to keep "Calder's Irregulars" away from the polls.[74]

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[70] *Ibid.*, 27 June 1912.

[71] *Province*, 21-22 June 1912.

[72] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, M. C. Wright to Liberal candidates and Liberal organizations, 28 June 1912; same to same, 4 July 1912.

[73] *Leader*, 29 June 1912, 3-5 July 1912.

On the eve of the election Haultain declared that he was confident the Scott government would be defeated,[75] but when the ballots were counted his confidence turned to disappointment. The Conservative representation in the Legislature was reduced from fourteen in a House of forty-one members to eight in a House of fifty-four. T. A. Anderson, William Elliott, A. B. Gillis and H. H. Willway, four of Haultain's ablest colleagues, were defeated. Haultain himself was returned in South Qu'Appelle by only 50 votes. Every Liberal member of the previous Legislature who stood for re-election was successful. Liberal majorities were much larger than in 1908. Of the cabinet ministers, W. R. Motherwell won by only 89 votes and A. P. McNab by 101, but Walter Scott's majority was 203, W. F. A. Turgeon's 724 and J. A. Calder's 882. Liberal candidates won by 200 votes or more in thirty of the forty-six ridings which returned supporters of the Scott government. Overall the Liberals secured 57.1 per cent of the popular vote and the Conservatives 41.8 per cent.[76]

The result of the election was almost as great a surprise to the Liberals as it was to their opponents. J. A. Calder was prepared to concede twenty seats to Haultain,[77] and the Conservatives, with a strong organization and the prestige of a Conservative federal government behind them, were confident of victory. "I think the Tories have lost faith in the power of the Federal Government to swing elections in this Province," Scott wrote to a party supporter after the election. "They have in the past accused us of winning through Federal influences but I think we have shown them that we can fight and win not only without Federal aid but in spite of Ottawa opposition."[78] The Premier had taken little part in the contest himself, and full credit for the victory properly belonged to J. A. Calder, whose organization of the Liberal campaign had been near-perfect.[79]

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[74] *Province*, 6 July 1912.

[75] *Ibid.*, 8 July 1912.

[76] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 40-42, 91-157; Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," p. 344. In Cumberland, one of the forty-six ridings won by the Liberals, the election was subsequently declared void. A by-election was held on 8 September 1913 and a supporter of the Scott government was elected.

The Conservatives blamed their defeat on irregularities in the compilation of the voters' lists, the work of government road gangs and the strength of reciprocity sentiment in the province.[80]

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[77] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, series SG(1), Calder to J. Betz, 4 July 1912.

[78] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to H. B. Chandler, 16 July 1912, p. 39509.

[79] *Ibid.*, Scott to G. H. V. Bulyea, 16 July 1912, p. 39427; Scott to J. Gibson, 31 July 1912, p. 39432. Scott's inactivity during the election campaign had led to renewed speculation in the Conservative press that he would shortly be forced to resign on account of ill health. (*Standard*, 22 June 1912.)

[80] *Province*, 12 July 1912; *Standard*, 12 July 1912.

On the first they seem to have had good grounds for complaint. The 1912 election was the first to be held on closed voters' lists, and the innovation caused some confusion. Many voters found themselves disfranchised because they had neglected to attend the registration sittings and make certain that their names were included on the lists.[81] During the campaign the Conservatives accused the government of deliberately removing the names of eligible voters from the final printed lists in favour of men who had not yet been naturalized. It was a charge which the Liberals were quick to deny.[82] Premier Scott claimed after the election that a thorough investigation by representatives of the Conservative party revealed that in the whole province only two names had been omitted from the final lists, and these through a printing error, but the evidence strongly suggests that in fact ". . . large numbers of ineligible persons, particularly newly-arrived foreign immigrants, were placed on the lists in 1912 . . . ."[83]

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[81] AS, Walter Scott Papers, private secretary to P. C. Friesen, 20 June 1912, p. 39296; Scott to A. Westman, 6 July 1912, pp. 39390-91.

[82] The Conservatives claimed that in North Battleford, for instance, a total of fifty-six names had been deliberately removed from the voters' list. (*Province*, 29 June 1912.) In a speech in the riding a few days later W. F. A. Turgeon reported that upon investigation he had discovered that one page of the revised list had not been forwarded to the printer. The error had been rectified, he claimed, and none of the fifty-six voters would suffer by it. (*Battleford Press*, 4 July 1912.)

[83] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. G. Ramsden, 30 July 1912, pp. 39637-38; Scott to J. Stovel, 1 August 1912, p. 39615; Smith, p. 43.

It was not the voters' lists that defeated the Conservatives or, for that matter, the army of government employees who toiled for the Liberal party at election time. It was reciprocity. Reciprocity was a federal issue, to be sure, but the Liberals were confident that it could be used to advantage against Haultain, the man who had first supported and then abruptly denounced the agreement with the United States. One Conservative admitted before the provincial election that "Haultain would have an easy fight if it were not for reciprocity and the cry that Mr. Borden is hostile to the West."[84] Haultain's stand on the trade question apparently cost him support even within his own party. G. B. Johnston, one of the two Opposition M.L.A.'s who had voted for the reciprocity resolution in February 1912, accepted a Liberal nomination in Melfort and carried the seat easily. So also did S. R. Moore, a former Provincial Rights organizer and editor of the *Swift Current Sun,* in Pinto Creek.[85] John Evans, an S.G.G.A. director who had been nominated as the Provincial Rights candidate in Saskatoon County, withdrew from the field in April 1912 and other resignations followed before the election took place.[86]

The Conservatives laboured under another obvious handicap in 1912: the Scott government's record of competent administration of provincial affairs. Haultain repeatedly criticized the rural telephone legislation introduced by the Liberals in 1908, for example, but there is little evidence to suggest that the farmers were themselves dissatisfied. The S.G.G.A. conventions of 1909 and 1910 made no reference, favourable or unfavourable, to the government's rural telephone policy. In February 1911 the farmers' organization considered a resolution calling for public ownership of rural telephones, and although it did not pass, A. B. Gillis introduced a similar motion in the Legislature a few days later. There was a brief debate, and a Liberal amendment which included the assertion that rural mutual companies could construct, operate and maintain telephone lines at a lower cost than the government was carried on a straight party vote.[87] The rural telephone network continued to expand, so that by 1912 a total of 251 rural companies had been incorporated with 5,809 miles of pole line and 6,148 subscribers.[88] Judging from the results of the election held that year, Haultain's pledge to integrate the rural telephone lines with the government system must have fallen on deaf ears.

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[84] PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, W. G. Cates to Willison, 30 April 1912, p. 5094.

[85] *Leader,* 12 April 1912, 15 April 1912.

[86] *Ibid.*, 13 April 1912; AS, J. A. Calder Papers, series P (8), Calder to J. H. Haslam, 30 April 1912.

The government's handling of the elevator question provided another illustration of the difficult position in which Haultain and his colleagues found themselves. They had vigorously opposed the bill creating the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company in 1911 and Haultain had promised to introduce a government elevator system if his party were to win the next election. Once the new company began operations, though, little more was heard of government ownership. A preliminary report presented to the Legislature in January 1912 showed that the Company had let contracts for the construction of forty elevators during the summer of 1911, with the expectation that these would be completed in time to handle the fall harvest. On account of a scarcity of materials only seventeen of the elevators were completed and ready for business by 1 December, and a month later nine were still unfinished. Six existing elevators were also purchased and by the end of the year the Saskatchewan "Co-op" had handled approximately 1,500,000 bushels of grain.[89] In the first report on a full year's business the general manager, C. A. Dunning, was able to paint a healthy picture of the young company. The balance sheet, presented to the farmer shareholders in Regina on 21 August 1912, showed a profit of $52,461. The Company declared a 6 per cent dividend on paid-up capital and set the remainder of the surplus aside, half to finance grain purchases and half to finance the purchase by shareholders of such necessary stables as fence wire, salt, coal and flour in carload lots. Dunning reported that the Saskatchewan "Co-op" had handled a total of 3,261,000 bushels of grain during the 1911-1912 season, and expected to have 140 elevators ready for operation by the end of the year.[90]

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[87] Spafford, pp. 31-32; *Leader*, 14 February 1911.

[88] As a point of comparison it might be noted that the government system at this time consisted of 70 exchanges, 195 toll offices and 2,163 miles of pole line, serving a total of 9,850 urban subscribers. (Saskatchewan, Department of Railways, Telegraphs and Telephones, *Annual Report*, 1912 [Regina: Government Printer 1913], pp. 21-22, 61.)

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[89] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1912, No. 12, C. A. Dunning to J. A. Calder, 17 January 1912.

The Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company had indeed proven a success, but the same could not be said of the system of government elevators which the Conservatives had established in Manitoba. The Manitoba Elevator Commission reported a deficit of $84,145 on its first year's operations. Official figures for the next year were never published, but in the spring of 1912 the Roblin government began negotiations with the Grain Growers' Grain Company with a view to leasing its elevators to the farmers' company.[91] Saskatchewan Liberals claimed during the 1912 election that the deficits incurred by the Manitoba Elevator Commission were proof that government ownership was an impractical solution to the farmer's grain marketing problems.[92] Whether such a conclusion was justified or not, it is significant that Haultain and his colleagues said not a word about government elevators during the campaign.

The outcome of the election must have been a bitter blow to F. W. G. Haultain. For the third time in eight years he had failed to dislodge the Scott government from power. Once before, in 1910, Haultain had submitted his resignation as leader of the Provincial Rights party.[93] Now he did so again, to a Conservative convention in Prince Albert on 23 October 1912. Haultain addressed the delegates briefly, his resignation was accepted and a remarkable political career which had begun twenty-five years before came to an end.[94] F. W. G. Haultain has been remembered, and rightly so, for his leadership in the struggle to secure responsible government and later provincial autonomy for the North-West Territories. His career as Leader of the Opposition in the Saskatchewan Legislature has been largely forgotten. Haultain dominated Territorial politics, partly perhaps because many potential rivals were early attracted to the larger stage at Ottawa, but he had never enjoyed the same success in the more competitive political arena that was Saskatchewan after 1905. The party he had organized to contest the first provincial election had grown weaker and more fragmented with each election, and for this Haultain must shoulder some of the blame. The provincial rights issue had become worn with use, and Haultain's inconsistency on the reciprocity issue had doomed him in the eyes of Saskatchewan farmers.

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[90] *Leader*, 22 August 1912.

[91] Patton, pp. 88-92.

[92] *Leader*, 22 June 1912, 24 June 1912.

It was no secret that Haultain was to succeed Chief Justice

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[93] Personal rather than party considerations prompted Haultain to offer his resignation at this time. The details of Haultain's troubled personal life are discussed in L. H. Thomas, "Political and Private Life of F. W. G. Haultain," pp. 55-57.

[94] *Standard*, 24 October 1912.

E. L. Wetmore on the Saskatchewan Supreme Court, and the official announcement of his appointment to the bench soon appeared in the press.[95] To succeed Haultain the Prince Albert convention chose a little-known Moose Jaw lawyer, W. B. Willoughby, who had been elected to the Legislature only a few months before.[96] The task facing Willoughby would not be an easy one. He would have to rebuild a shattered party and restore the morale of his discouraged supporters throughout the province. The Liberals were firmly entrenched in office for another term at least, Walter Scott was a vigorous and popular Premier and J. A. Calder had proven his mastery of the intricate details of party organization.

Premier Scott's health, which had already been the subject of a good deal of newspaper comment, continued to be a matter of concern to his doctors and his friends. "I hope now that this fight is over," a friend wrote after the election,

> that you will realize that you are not a Hercules physically and that you will get yourself in perfect shape and then when you get yourself in perfect shape don't put yourself out of business again by working your head off and looking after all the details of everything: keep a general oversight over matters.[97]

The doctors in Philadelphia advised a further period of rest before Scott resumed his duties as head of the government, and the Premier made preparations to sail from New York at the end of August for a month's visit to Europe.[98] Shortly before his departure the government announced a general reorganization of the cabinet. Scott gave up the Public Works portfolio which he had held since 1905 and assumed responsibility for the Department of Education. J. A. Calder relinquished the post of Provincial Treasurer but retained that of Railways and Telephones. W. R. Motherwell continued as Minister of Agriculture and W. F. A. Turgeon as Attorney General, and A. P. McNab became Minister of Public Works. At the same time, two new ministers were sworn in. George Bell, the M.L.A. for Estevan, became Provincial Treasurer, and George Langley, the English-born farmer and district director of the S.G.G.A. who had represented Redberry since 1905, was named Minister of Municipal Affairs.[99]

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[95] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Turgeon to W. Scott, 2 October 1912; *Standard*, 2 November 1912.

[96] *Standard*, 24 October 1912.

[97] AS, Walter Scott Papers, M. K. Cowan to Scott, 13 July 1912, pp. 54815-16.

The selection of George Langley was of more than ordinary significance, for he was the second prominent representative of the S.G.G.A. to join the cabinet. His appointment provided another illustration of the close relationship which was developing between the Scott government and the farmers' organization. From the beginning, Scott and the Liberals had paid particular attention to the wishes of rural voters as expressed through the annual Grain Growers' conventions and had been careful to consult the S.G.G.A.

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[98] *Ibid.*, Scott to M. K. Cowan, 13 August 1912, p. 54817.

[99] *Leader*, 20 August 1912.

before implementing legislation of interest to the farmers of the province. The effective pressure for legislation often came from the farmers themselves. Once the S.G.G.A. had taken a position in favour of public ownership of telephones and elevators, for instance, government action was almost imperative. The way in which Scott handled these two questions strongly suggests that he did not take the Grain Growers' requests for public ownership at face value, but rather assumed, correctly as it turned out, that the farmers were more interested in an effective remedy than in public ownership. The S.G.G.A. might endorse the Partridge Plan at successive annual conventions, but it was clear that some members of the executive had serious doubts about the scheme which they were pressing the Scott government to adopt. The farmers' advocacy of public ownership appears in retrospect to have been in fact "less a reflex of collectivist doctrine than the calculated tactic of a pressure group."[100] By the time of Langley's appointment to the cabinet the annual S.G.G.A. conventions had come to rival the Legislative Assembly as the most important public forum in Saskatchewan. Not only were Scott and his colleagues careful to consult with the S.G.G.A. executive in drafting the elevator and hail insurance legislation, but they also submitted these bills for the approval of the "farmers' parliament" before the elected representatives of the province were permitted to discuss them in the House.

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[100] D. S. Spafford, "The Elevator Issue, the Organized Farmers and the Government, 1908-1911," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XV, No. 3 (Autumn, 1962), p. 81.

If careful attention to the wishes of farm voters was one distinguishing characteristic of the Liberal regime now firmly established in office at Regina, another was its insistence upon a thorough investigation, by royal commission if necessary, before taking action on a particular problem. As a Liberal back-bencher put it on one occasion, the government "had the good sense to look before leaping."[101] The tactic had already paid political dividends in the case of telephones and elevators, and the same cautious approach was evident when the Liberals set out to investigate the feasibility of generating and distributing electric power. To conduct the power investigation the Scott government secured the services of R. O. Wynne-Roberts, a consulting engineer then employed by the city of Regina.[102] Wynne-Roberts began the work at once, and in mid-November he presented his findings to the government. Cheap power and fuel were necessary for industrial and commercial development, but Saskatchewan was handicapped in this regard by the absence of any local supply of bituminous coal and by the high cost of imported fuel. There were enormous deposits of lignite coal in the province, and the experience of Germany and other countries demonstrated that this soft coal could be utilized as a fuel to produce power on a large scale. Wynne-Roberts therefore concluded that the generation of electric power at the coal fields in southern Saskatchewan was "both a practicable and commercial possibility." This power could be distributed from a central generating station to Regina, Moose Jaw and other communities at a low rate if the larger centres co-operated by taking current in bulk. He recommended that the government build an experimental plant to determine the best method of converting Saskatchewan lignite into a fuel suitable for heating and power generation purposes.[103] Within a few months the government began the construction of such a plant at Estevan,[104] but it was clear that until a large scale commercial briquetting process was perfected Scott and his colleagues were not prepared to commit themselves to a definite power policy.

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[101] *Leader*, 19 November 1912.

[102] *Ibid.*, 28 June 1912.

Early in 1913 the provincial government appointed another royal commission, this time to investigate the related problems of cheaper money for agricultural development and higher prices for Canadian grain. The commission actually consisted of two sections: the Agricultural Credit Commission, composed of John H. Haslam, a Regina businessman, C. A. Dunning, general manager of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and Professor E. H. Oliver of the University of Saskatchewan; and the Grain Markets

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[103] Saskatchewan, *Report on Coal and Power Investigation* (Regina: Government Printer, 1913), pp. 130-31.

[104] *Leader*, 4 April 1913.

Commission, composed of Haslam, Dunning and George Langley.[105] At their first meeting held on 22 March 1913 it was agreed that the royal commission should be regarded and should act as one body for the purpose of both inquiries, although each section would be responsible only for the report of its phase of the work. The commissioners decided that the grain markets investigation should attempt to find ways of reducing the cost to the farmer of producing, transporting and marketing his grain, and of improving the relative standing and therefore increasing the price of Canadian grain in world markets. J. H. Haslam was to investigate the agricultural credit systems of Australia and New Zealand and, with Professor Oliver, investigate European credit systems as members of a large American commission undertaking a similar study. It was also agreed that public sittings should be held at selected places in Saskatchewan to allow interested parties to present their views.[106]

The Commission first visited the chief grain handling centres in eastern Canada and the United States before journeying to Great Britain and several European countries to gather information. During the month of August the Commission held a series of public hearings in seventeen Saskatchewan towns and cities to permit farmers, representatives of loan companies, boards of trade and the general public to present their views regarding the availability of mortgage and personal credit, and the profitability of grain growing in the province at that time. These sittings also provided an opportunity for members of the Commission to explain the various types of co-operative and state-aided agricultural credit systems which they had investigated in other countries.[107]

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[105] *C.A.R.*, 1913, p. 613.

[106] *Leader*, 28 March 1913.

By the time the Agricultural Credit Commission submitted its report to the government, in October 1913, the province was beginning to feel the effects of a world-wide financial depression. Saskatchewan's towns and cities were the first to feel the pinch. They had been swept up in a frenzied real estate boom which had peaked in 1912, a year which saw the value of building permits in the province's cities reach $23,564,561. Some of this of course was purely speculative, but the boom years also witnessed the construction of fine new homes, schools and churches, and modern office buildings such as the Drinkle Block in Saskatoon and the ten-story McCallum-Hill Building in Regina. There was a noticeable curtailment of business expansion in 1913. The investment boom began to slacken -- the total value of building permits issued during the year dropped to $16,122,455 -- and unemployment became a serious problem in the province's cities.[108]

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[107] *Ibid.*, 8-26 August 1913.

[108] Archer, pp. 146, 151-70, 174-75; Drake, pp. 119-20, 134-36, 148-51; Abrams, pp. 176-83; McPherson, pp. 161-75; R. Rees, "The 'Magic City on the Banks of the Saskatchewan': The Saskatoon Real Estate Boom, 1910-1913," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXVII, No. 2 (Spring, 1974), pp. 51-59; *Agriculture Report*, 1913, p. 191.

For Saskatchewan farmers, fine weather in the spring of 1913 had promised a good crop and the area sown to wheat showed another increase over previous years, particularly in the western portion of the province. The crop did mature in splendid condition, and an early and rapid harvest resulted in almost 50 per cent more grain being shipped to the Lakehead before the end of the year as compared to 1912. The Saskatchewan harvest was the largest ever, 112,369,405 bushels, but the harvest in Australia, Argentina and the United States was also large in 1913. This, coupled with "... the tightness of the money market and the higher rate of interest ... had ... an adverse effect on prices generally", with the result that Saskatchewan farmers received considerably less for their wheat than they had in past years.[109]

The information gathered by the Agricultural Credit Commission showed just how vulnerable the farmer's financial position had become by 1913. In previous years the usual rate of interest on farm mortgages in Saskatchewan had been 8 per cent, but on a large proportion of new mortgages the rate was 9 or even 10 per cent, particularly in the more recently settled areas of the province. Moreover, interest rates of 12 or even 15 per cent were not uncommon. Not less than 80 per cent of the patented farms in the province were mortgaged, the Commission estimated, though these mortgages were found to be "numerous rather than heavy." The Commission also found that in recent months farmers had experienced great difficulty in negotiating personal loans. Again the situation was more serious in recently settled areas, but even in older districts bank managers had refused to make new loans in view of the scarcity of money. In Regina, Moose Jaw, Saskatoon and other communities where the competition among banks was keen, interest rates averaged 8 per cent, but in newer districts the rates on loans were 9, 10 or 12 per cent.[110]

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[109] *Agriculture Report,* 1913, pp. 95-99, 108-109.

The actual extent of the indebtedness of Saskatchewan farmers was, the Commission found, "well nigh impossible to estimate with any degree of accuracy ...."[111] As a conservative estimate, it placed the amount due on mortgages to trust, loan and insurance companies at $65,000,000. Only a small percentage of farmers paid cash in buying agricultural implements, since they were usually unable to obtain sufficient credit at the bank, and the Commission suggested that perhaps $35,000,000 was owed to implement companies. The amount due for the purchase of land, horses and lumber, for store and bank credit and miscellaneous debts it placed at not less than $50,000,000. The farmers of Saskatchewan were, then, paying interest on a debt of at least $150,000,000, which amounted to perhaps $12,000,000 annually.[112]

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[110] Saskatchewan, *Report of the Agricultural Credit Commission* (Regina: Government Printer, 1913), pp. 27-33, 47-48, 52-55.

[111] *Ibid.*, p. 64.

[112] *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52, 63-65.

From their study of agricultural credit facilities in Europe, the Commission concluded that the solution to the problem of cheaper farm credit lay in the application of co-operative principles: co-operative buying and selling and co-operative credit. To encourage the former, the Commission recommended that the government pass co-operative legislation and assist in the organization of co-operative societies throughout the province. To provide long-term credit the Commission proposed that a Co-operative Farm Mortgage Association, modelled on the German *Landschaften* banks, be established to create competition for the existing lending institutions in Saskatchewan. With local branches throughout the province, this co-operative credit society would be empowered to make loans to its members on mortgage security for approved agricultural, productive or improvement purposes only. The money would be raised through the sale of bonds issued on the joint security of all members of the Association and guaranteed by the provincial government. The rate of interest would be low, including only the cost to the Association of the money itself, expenses of administration and provision for creation of a reserve fund with the idea of eventually making the Association self-supporting and no longer in need of government guarantees. By raising money on the credit of the province through the sale of bonds, and loaning it to farmers at the price at which the bonds could be sold plus the cost of administration, the Commission confidently believed that this co-operative credit society could bring about a reduction in interest rates. Even if they fell by only 1 per cent, the Commission pointed out, Saskatchewan farmers would save over $1,500,000 a year in interest charges.[113]

The government moved quickly to carry out these recommendations. The Speech from the Throne delivered by Lieutenant-Governor G. W. Brown on 6 November 1913 made passing reference to "the financial contraction which has been and is apparent in the world's money centres," noted that the year had witnessed the elevation of North Battleford and Weyburn to city status, the opening of the first buildings at the University of Saskatchewan and the construction of "urgently needed public buildings, notably the Hospital for the Insane at Battleford, the Normal School at Regina and the New Regina Jail," and promised that legislation along the lines suggested by the Agricultural Credit Commission would be presented to the Legislature for its approval.[114] In due course Premier Scott introduced a bill creating the Saskatchewan Co-operative Farm Mortgage Association and W. R. Motherwell another providing for the encouragement of co-operative societies in the province.

W. B. Willoughby had earlier criticized the government's decision to conduct an inquiry instead of bringing down legislation at once.[115] He repeated these criticisms during the debate on the bills, and suggested that a government-operated agricultural credit agency, such as those in Australia and New Zealand, would better meet the needs of Saskatchewan farmers than the scheme which the Liberals proposed to implement. A private co-operative credit society would experience great difficulty in floating its bonds, particularly during the "present period of money stringency" when Saskatchewan farmers were most in need of cheap agricultural credit. Apart from this, the Conservatives offered little opposition to the bills and they passed easily in December 1913.[116]

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[113] *Ibid.*, pp. 64, 217-19.

[114] *Journals*, 1913, pp. 9-11.

[115] *Leader*, 19 November 1912.

Meanwhile, the members of the Grain Markets Commission were busy completing their report, which was finally presented to the government in January 1914. An exhaustive examination of the Canadian grain trade by a Saskatchewan royal commission needed no justification:

> The prosperity of Saskatchewan depends and always must depend on agriculture. This is a pioneer province and pioneer agriculture must with us consist principally in grain production. Under our conditions of soil, climate and markets, grain production offers at once the simplest, easiest and quickest means to permanent agricultural development. A large proportion of our incoming settlers are not equipped at the outset with either the knowledge or the capital to enable them to embark in other lines of farming as well, desirable as it is that they should do so as soon as they can. For many years to come, therefore, the conditions under which the grower of grain - the pioneer agriculturist - pursues his calling, and the financial returns which he receives, should be the chief economic or material concern of the Provincial Government.[117]

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[116] *Saskatoon Daily Star* [hereafter cited as *Saskatoon Star*], 16 December 1913; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 4 Geo. V, Chapters 61-62.

[117] Saskatchewan, *Report of the Grain Markets Commission* (Regina: Government Printer, 1914), p. 11.

After surveying the various factors affecting the cost of producing, transporting and marketing Saskatchewan's staple product, the Commission concluded that exclusive grain growing as generally practiced by even the best farmers in the province was not profitable. The report cited various ways in which the costs of producing and marketing Saskatchewan grain could be reduced, and urged farmers to combine stock raising with grain growing.[118]

The findings of the Agricultural Credit and Grains Markets Commissions presented a disturbing assessment of the state of Saskatchewan agriculture, one that was very different from the predictions of unbounded growth and prosperity which had accompanied the birth of the province only eight years before. Clearly, in a province so heavily dependent on the production of a single staple crop, ensuring that Saskatchewan farmers received a fair return for their labours and encouraging the diversification of the Saskatchewan economy would be important tasks for future provincial governments. The breaking of the investment boom in 1913 had demonstrated that one of the most important requirements of Saskatchewan farmers was cheaper agricultural credit but, as W. B. Willoughby had predicted, the unsettled economic and political situation in Europe made it difficult to secure money cheaply enough for the Saskatchewan Co-operative Farm Mortgage Association to begin operations. Consequently Premier Scott announced early in 1914 that implementation of the farm loan scheme would be postponed until conditions improved.[119] Conditions in Europe did not improve, of course. Within a few months the world would be plunged into war, a war that would profoundly affect Saskatchewan's public life, its society and its economy.

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[118] Ibid., pp. 119-23. No legislation followed from this report, since many of its recommendations fell outside provincial jurisdiction.

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[119] *C.A.R.*, 1914, p. 638.

CHAPTER IV

THE SCOTT GOVERNMENT, THE WAR AND REFORM

The last weeks of July 1914 were hot and dry. Saskatchewan farmers looked on helplessly as their crops withered away in the searing summer winds. The situation was most acute in southwestern Saskatchewan, where it was drier than the oldest settlers could ever remember, and where farmers, many of them recent homesteaders ill prepared to bear the loss of income, were already beginning to plough under the sparse standing grain. The wheat crop in the drought-stricken southwest averaged only two bushels per acre. In other parts of the province the yield was better -- sixteen or seventeen bushels per acre were common farther north or east -- but the total harvest in 1914, 74,610,643 bushels, was little more than two-thirds that of the previous year.[1] The weather and the crop situation were the chief topics of conversation in Saskatchewan that summer of 1914, and few paid much attention to the gathering storm in Europe. The manoeuvrings of European diplomats and the mobilization of vast armies seemed far removed from the everyday concerns of a farming population. War seemed unthinkable, particularly a war in which Canadians would be directly involved, but in the first week of August the unthinkable suddenly became a reality. The "Great War" of 1914-1918, as the generation of Canadians who bore its scars would name it, was to have a profound effect upon the province of Saskatchewan, its politics and its people.

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[1] *Agriculture Report,* 1914, pp. 107-108, 113.

In Saskatchewan, as elsewhere in the Dominion, Great Britain's declaration of war on 4 August evoked an outburst of patriotic sentiment. Reservists in the British army left to join their old regiments, and recruiting began almost at once for the Canadian Expeditionary Force. There was little need at the beginning of the war for intensive recruiting campaigns. In Prince Albert, for instance, the members of the 52nd Regiment, The Prince Albert Volunteers, enlisted for active service almost to a man. Cheering crowds lined the streets of cities and towns across the province to see the first contingents off to Valcartier for training, and those who remained at home organized campaigns to raise money for Belgian relief, the Red Cross and other worthy causes.[2] Premier Scott and his colleagues set an example for the rest of the province by contributing 10 per cent of their salaries to the Canadian Patriotic Fund, and the provincial government sent a gift of 1,285 horses for the use of the British forces.[3]

The European conflict had an immediate impact on political life in Saskatchewan. Party considerations were set aside when the Legislature met briefly in September 1914, and W. B. Willoughby pledged that the Opposition would loyally support any government measure which would enable the province to assist the Empire in its hour of need.[4] The Conservatives even allowed the estimates to pass without criticism after the Premier had privately assured Willoughby that the government would not take advantage of the situation and dissolve the Legislature before another session was held. Scott repeated these assurances in the House, and declared that if any unforeseen circumstances should make a dissolution necessary before then, he would first consult with the Leader of the Opposition.[5]

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[2] Abrams, p. 220; Drake, pp. 157-58; McPherson, pp. 198-99; *C.A.R.*, 1914, pp. 222-28, 632.

[3] *C.A.R.*, 1914, pp. 631-32; *Agriculture Report*, 1914, pp. 9, 74-78.

The government, for its part, refrained from introducing any contentious or partisan legislation during the ten-day session. The House approved the spending of $750,000 for various patriotic purposes, and amended the acts affecting cities, towns, villages and rural municipalities to permit grants to the Canadian Patriotic Fund and allow delinquent taxpayers more time to make their payments.[6] W. F. A. Turgeon brought down another bill giving wide powers to the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, including the power to declare a temporary moratorium on foreclosure and the legal collection of debts, and to close any or all bars and wholesale liquor stores for the duration of the war if such action was deemed in the public interest. This measure also passed easily, and the Legislature prorogued on 24 September with the singing of "God Save the King."[7]

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[4] *Leader,* 17 September 1914.

[5] *Ibid.*, 22 September 1914.

[6] Saskatchewan, *Statutes,* 5 Geo. V, Chapters 3, 12-15.

The war and the almost total crop failure in southwestern Saskatchewan brought serious hardship to many residents of the province. The Scott government attempted to alleviate the distress as best it could. In August the Board of Highway Commissioners commenced an extensive road and bridge construction program in the southwest to provide employment for drought-stricken farmers, and the government secured special reduced railway rates for those wishing to obtain harvest work in areas of the province where crops were normal.[8] The government also assisted trustees to keep schools open, and in co-operation with Homemakers' Clubs, churches and other philanthropic organizations collected and distributed warm winter clothing to needy families in the dried-out areas.[9] In the cities, where unemployment had been a serious problem ever since the breaking of the investment boom in 1913, the war brought building construction to a complete standstill. As winter approached it was estimated that in Regina, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw alone there were more than 4,000 men out of work. The task of securing employment for these men, or providing them with relief, fell largely upon the municipal authorities, but the provincial government did make special grants, totalling $57,000, to the communities most seriously affected.[10]

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[7] *Leader*, 19 September 1914, 25 September 1914; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 5 Geo. V, Chapter 2.

[8] *Leader*, 21 August 1914, 27 August 1914.

[9] *Agriculture Report*, 1914, pp. 10-11, 177.

There were many demands for a moratorium to protect farmers who, because of crop failure or for other reasons, were unable to meet their payments to banks, implement companies and other creditors. The Premier and his colleagues took the view that such a drastic step, one which they believed would impair the credit of the entire province, was not justified.[11] The government did issue a proclamation on 30 September 1914 postponing for six months all proceedings for sale or foreclosure against volunteers and reservists,[12] but in other cases it attempted to mediate between a farmer and his creditors in the hope of securing a settlement acceptable to both parties. This work was entrusted to a Debtors' Relief Bureau which was set up within the Department of Agriculture. The Bureau succeeded in persuading many creditors to permit farmers to sow and reap another crop before resorting to extreme collection measures.[13] Though the Bureau continued to receive appeals from farmers for assistance in dealing with their creditors well into 1915, its work was discontinued that year because

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[10] *Ibid.*, pp. 175-77.

[11] *Leader*, 17 September 1914.

[12] *Saskatchewan Gazette*, Vol. X, No. 18, 30 September 1914, pp. 11-12. This protection was accorded to all Saskatchewan volunteers and reservists until the end of the war. (Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Geo. V, Chapter 7.)

> ... it was not considered in the public interest that the financial dealings of any class in the community should be regulated by the department except during unusual circumstances such as resulted from the crop failure of 1914.[14]

Indeed for most Saskatchewan farmers the situation improved dramatically in 1915. Inspired by the slogan "Patriotism and Production" and by the prospect of higher prices on account of war-time demand, they seeded 10,543,796 acres to wheat and other cereal crops. Weather conditions were ideal, with the result that Saskatchewan grew half the wheat crop of Canada in 1915 and the largest in the history of the province, 173,723,775 bushels. The crop averaged 25.2 bushels per acre, thereby surpassing the previous record of 23 bushels per acre set in 1905.[15] The bountiful harvest helped to swell contributions to the Patriotic Acre Fund, a scheme suggested by T. M. Morgan, a member of the S.G.G.A., and adopted by the farmers' organization as its annual convention in 1915. Farmers in the province were asked to contribute each year the grain harvested from one or more acres, and this grain was to be milled and shipped as a gift to Great Britain in special sacks bearing the S.G.G.A. emblem. More than 5,000 acres were pledged in the first year, and more than 3,000,000 pounds of flour were shipped from Saskatchewan to Great Britain.[16]

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[13] *Agriculture Report,* 1914, pp. 9-10, 111-12.

[14] *Agriculture Report,* 1916, p. 10.

[15] *Ibid.,* pp. 10, 112-14, 123-26.

High farm prices prevailed throughout the remainder of the war, and this brought general prosperity to an overwhelmingly agricultural province. The total value of all field crops and livestock in Saskatchewan rose from an estimated $264,398,237 in 1914 to $373,550,385 in 1915, $448,366,501 in 1916, and $609,588,065 in 1917, and then dropped slightly to $585,733,357 in 1918.[17] Saskatchewan farmers were tempted by the high prices of the war years to expand their operations and increase grain production. The area seeded to wheat and other cereal crops increased by approximately 2,000,000 acres in 1916 and again in 1917, and by a little over 1,000,000 acres in the last year of the war, to a total of 15,901,512 acres.[18]

Despite this very substantial increase, the harvests in the last three years of the war fell far short of that of 1915. In 1916 unusually severe hail storms and a serious infestation of rust reduced the total crop to 121,864,454 bushels, and resulted in a loss to Saskatchewan farmers which the Department of Agriculture put at $100,000,000.[19] The 1917 crop was smaller still, 117,921,300 bushels, but it was of higher quality, "... 65% to 70% grading No. 1 Northern or better" at a time when farmers were receiving $2.21 per bushel for the top grades of wheat.[20] The 1918 crop turned out to be one of the poorest in years, with only 92,493,000 bushels harvested. Drought destroyed much of the crop in the western part of Saskatchewan, and the federal and provincial governments were obliged, as in 1914, to provide relief to hard-pressed settlers in those districts. In co-operation with the railways arrangements were made to ship in hay and winter feed free of freight, and cattle and sheep were transported to districts where there was still good pasture. Again, as in the first year of the war, farmers pressed the provincial government to intervene with their creditors, and officials of the Department of Agriculture set about the now familiar task of securing an accommodation between debtor and creditor that would enable the former to carry on farming operations for another year.[21]

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[16] *Guide*, 28 October 1914, 15 December 1915; *C.A.R.*, 1915, p. 681.

[17] *Agriculture Report*, 1914, pp. 135, 140; 1916, p. 128; 1917, pp. 120-21; 1919, p. 110.

[18] *Agriculture Report*, 1919, p. 109.

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[19] *Agriculture Report,* 1917, pp. 12, 116.

[20] *Agriculture Report,* 1918, pp. 18, 108, 112. In the early years of the war the grain trade had continued to function through its normal channels, but in June 1917 the Canadian government assumed control of the grain trade for the duration. A Board of Grain Supervisors was given monopoly control over domestic and overseas wheat sales. It handled the remainder of the 1916 Canadian wheat crop and the crops of 1917 and 1918, fixing prices at $2.40 per bushel, $2.21 per bushel and $2.24 per bushel, respectively, for the top grade of western wheat in each of those crop years. (Fowke, pp. 166-71.)

The farmer's satisfaction with the high returns of the war years was offset by spiralling costs of production. Expanding his operations involved heavy capital expenditures for additional land and machinery, such as the gasoline-powered tractors that were coming into use on the prairies during these years,[22] commitments that might prove disastrous if prices fell. He was also faced with a serious shortage of agricultural labour during the war. The outbreak of hostilities in August 1914 put an end to the influx of immigrants from overseas, thus drying up a potential source of farm workers, and the C.E.F. and munitions plants in the east made new demands on the available labour supply. The situation first became acute in the spring of 1916. Soldiers in training in the province were given leave of absence to help with seeding, and additional leaves had to be provided in the fall. The harvest labour situation became so acute that the Premier issued an appeal to any able-bodied men who could do so to assist in bringing in the crop, and the

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[21] *Agriculture Report*, 1919, pp. 10, 102-104, 160-61.

[22] To encourage greater agricultural production in 1918 the Canada Food Board purchased 1,000 of these gasoline tractors from the Ford Company and sold them to farmers at cost plus freight. (*Leader*, 13 February 1918.) The machines were distributed through the provincial departments of agriculture, with over 800 going to western Canada and the remainder chiefly to Ontario. Demand was so brisk that arrangements had to be made to secure an additional supply of the tractors after the initial deliveries had been completed. (*Guide*, 5 June 1918.)

Minister of Agriculture asked for volunteers from his department to join the threshing gangs.[23] Army recruits were again pressed into service during seeding and harvest in 1917 and 1918, and teenage boys were enrolled as "Soldiers of the Soil" and excused from school while they toiled in the fields.[24]

While the wartime demand for foodstuffs stimulated agricultural expansion, and Saskatchewan farmers enjoyed the highest prices in their memory, other sectors of the provincial economy more or less marked time between 1914 and 1918. The flood of immigration that had been largely responsible for Saskatchewan's rapid growth was sharply curtailed. Homestead entries in the province declined dramatically, from 14,524 in 1913 to 9,752 in 1914, 4,515 in 1916 and 1,280 in 1918.[25] For Saskatchewan's cities the war years were a period of retrenchment, particularly for Prince Albert, where the still unfinished La Colle Falls hydro-electric power project had brought that city to the verge of bankruptcy.[26] The war's impact on the urban centres of the province is best shown in the figures for building construction. The value of buildings constructed in the seven cities of the province in 1914 was $4,368,368, less than a quarter of the previous year's total. In 1915 it dropped to $729,463. There was a slight increase to $853,332 in 1916, $1,492,778 in 1917 and $2,388,358 in the last year of the war.[27] Between 1911 and 1916 the population of Regina actually fell, from 30,213 to 26,127. None of its rivals experienced a similar decline, and by 1916 Saskatoon had supplanted Moose Jaw as the second largest city in the province.

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[23] *Agriculture Report,* 1917, pp. 108-109.

[24] *Agriculture Report,* 1918, pp. 108, 154; 1919, pp. 9, 102.

[25] *Agriculture Report,* 1919, p. 115.

[26] Abrams, pp. 228-45.

Lumbering in Saskatchewan, in common with nearly all the western provinces, showed a decrease in output in 1914 as compared with earlier years. The number of active mills in the province dropped from twenty-five in 1913 to seventeen in 1914. There was a modest increase in production during each of the remaining years of the war, and the value of the lumber cut rose as well, from $842,664 in 1914 to $1,189,351 in 1916 and $2,258,450 in 1918. This last figure was still below the prewar high of $2,535,611 set in 1912.[29] The needs of a wartime economy also gave a modest boost to the lignite coal mines in the Estevan-Bienfait area. Output rose from 237,249 tons in 1915 to 360,081 tons in 1918, but the market for this inferior coal was limited by the fact that its high moisture content made it difficult to store. In 1918 even the demand in districts where most of this fuel was consumed was lower than in previous years, "... causing several of the mines to suspend operations for some days in each week."[30] Wheat was still king in Saskatchewan, and at the end of the war other industries in the province remained of minor importance.

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[27] *Agriculture Report,* 1914, pp. 159-60; 1918, pp. 147-48; 1919, p. 26.

[28] Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Census of Prairie Provinces, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, 1916*, (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1918), pp. 53-70.

[29] *Agriculture Report,* 1914, p. 159; 1916, p. 165; 1917, pp. 148-49; 1918, p. 138; 1919, p. 16; 1920, p. 360.

Saskatchewan's contribution to the war effort was not solely that of a food producer. The twenty recruiting centres in the province enrolled a total of 844 commissioned officers, 70 nursing sisters, and more than 40,000 other ranks for service in the C.E.F., and six Saskatchewan men were awarded the Victoria Cross, the Empire's highest recognition for valour.[31] The province also contributed its share and more in the three great "Victory Loan" bond drives of the war period. Saskatchewan's response to the first war bond campaign in 1917 surprised even the Victory Loan organizers. It was thought that Saskatchewan, never having been a lending province, would do well to raise between $5,000,000 and $10,000,000. In the end the Dominion executive set an objective of $12,000,000 for the province, but the 8,000 men and women who canvassed Saskatchewan on behalf of the Victory Loan raised nearly twice that amount.[32] In 1918, notwithstanding the fact that crop conditions were very poor, and that the platform publicity campaign had to be dropped on account of the influenza epidemic that struck the province in the midst of the harvest season, the second Victory Loan drive collected over $25,000,000.[33] The third campaign did not take place until after the war had ended. Appeals to patriotism could no longer be as effective in securing funds and canvassers, but there was no threat of influenza to hamper the campaign, and approximately $20,000,000 was collected in 1919.[34] In addition to these large sums raised through the Victory Bond drives, Saskatchewan also contributed a further $7,214,142 to the Canadian Patriotic Fund, the Red Cross, Belgian Relief and the Patriotic Acre scheme.[35]

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[30] *Agriculture Report*, 1918, p. 139; 1919, p. 17.

[31] C. P. Stacey, "Information concerning Saskatchewan regiments and services of Saskatchewan men and militia units in the European war, 1914-1918." (Unpublished manuscript, AS).

The war's impact was also felt in other ways on the "home front". One of the most dramatic and far-reaching was the impetus it gave to the campaign to restrict the sale and consumption of liquor in Saskatchewan. An aroused public opinion forced the Scott government to close the bars as a war measure in 1915, and a year later, with women permitted to vote for the first time, Saskatchewan rolled up an impressive majority for complete provincial prohibition in a special referendum. The prohibition crusade, and the wider reform movement of which it was a part, were not simply wartime phenomena. There could be found in Canada before 1914 associations dedicated to such diverse objectives as municipal ownership of utilities, the single tax, conservation of natural resources, direct legislation, women's suffrage and, of course, temperance reform.[36]

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[32] *Leader*, 14 December 1917.

[33] *Budget Speech delivered by Hon. C. A. Dunning, Provincial Treasurer of Saskatchewan, in the Legislative Assembly, January 29, 1919* [hereafter cited as *Budget Speech*] (Regina: King's Printer, 1919), p. 4. The budget addresses for 1919 and all subsequent years were printed by order of the Legislature.

[34] *Leader*, 18 November 1919.

[35] *Budget Speech*, 1919, pp. 3-4.

It was the campaign against the liquor traffic which had attracted the earliest and widest support among Saskatchewan reformers, and which had aroused the greatest public controversy in the province before 1914. This "war to the death between the church and the saloon," as one clergyman called it,[37] began in December 1907 with the formation of the Social and Moral Reform Council of Saskatchewan. Representatives of the Methodist, Presbyterian, Anglican and Baptist Churches, the Women's Christian Temperance Union, the Royal Templars of Temperance and the Trades and Labour Councils of Regina and Moose Jaw attended the founding convention in Regina and agreed to press at once for a local option law.[38]

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[36] This reform movement has only recently begun to receive serious attention from Canadian historians. Urban reform has been examined in the article by P. Rutherford cited previously, and R. B. Splane's *Social Welfare in Ontario, 1791-1893: A Study of Public Welfare Administration* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965) provides a comprehensive account of the evolution of welfare legislation in that province. C. L. Cleverdon's *The Woman Suffrage Movement in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950) is the standard work on that subject. The only comprehensive history of the temperance and prohibition movement in Canada remains R. Spence's *Prohibition in Canada* (Toronto: Ontario Branch of the Dominion Alliance, 1919). The social gospel, which permeated North American Protestantism at the close of the nineteenth century, and which provided much of the philosophical underpinning of the reform movement has recently been examined in R. Allen's *The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-1928* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).

The initial efforts of the Social and Moral Reform Council to curtail the liquor traffic met with mixed success. The Liquor Licence Act, passed by the Legislature in 1908, granted local option privileges to cities, towns and rural municipalities, shortened the hours of sale and prohibited the issuing of licences to clubs.[39] The first local option campaigns took place in December 1908, and by 1910 Moose Jaw and some forty smaller communities were "dry."[40] Encouraged by the results of these local option contests, representatives of the Social and Moral Reform Council met with Scott and Turgeon in January 1911 and urged the government to enact a provincial prohibition measure. The Premier refused to comply with this request, claiming that the people of Saskatchewan were not ready to support such a radical change in the liquor laws, and that local option had not yet received a fair trial. The government did promise that it would rigidly enforce the Liquor Licence Act, but beyond this it was not prepared to go.[41]

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[37] *Leader,* 24 February 1915.

[38] *Ibid.,* 14 December 1907. The labour representatives dissociated themselves from the Council immediately after the convention ended because it had not endorsed the principle of government ownership and control of the liquor traffic which workingmen favoured.

[39] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8 Edw. VII, Chapter 14.

[40] E. Pinno, "Temperance and Prohibition in Saskatchewan" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Regina, 1971), pp. 25-26; Spence, pp. 428-29.

This cautious approach to the liquor question was dictated in part at least by practical political considerations. There were some Liberals of course, including W. R. Motherwell and even the Premier himself, who personally wished to see further restrictions placed on the liquor traffic, but Scott was firmly convinced that the political party which depended on the "so-called temperance people" for support at election time was "sitting on a very shaky stool."[42]

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[41] *Leader*, 27 January 1911.

[42] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to Dr. D. B. Neely, 15 September 1908, p. 48268. The strongest temperance man in the cabinet was undoubtedly W. R. Motherwell, a staunch Presbyterian and president of the Imperial Temperance Hotel in Abernethy. (*C.P.G.*, 1908, p. 442.) Motherwell was prepared in 1910 to take an active part in the local option campaign, but the pressure of departmental business forced the Minister of Agriculture to cancel his meetings. (AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to C. B. Keenleyside, 7 July 1910, p. 10744.) Premier Scott, too, claimed to hold "pretty strong opinions" on the question of temperance, and expressed the hope as early as 1905 that the hotel bar could be eradicated. (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to W. H. Sissons, 12 September 1905, pp. 48127-28.) Upon reflection Scott and his colleagues may have considered the 1908 liquor legislation too far

> Not one Tory prohibitionist will turn his support to us merely because individual Liberal papers and voters support the prohibition cause. On the other hand I can certainly count on Liberal hotel owners turning their support against the Liberal party ....[43]

If Scott and his colleagues were not prepared, for obvious political reasons, to introduce more restrictive legislation until they believed public opinion would support it, neither were they willing to relax the provisions of the existing liquor law. When the Licensed Victuallers' Association, representing the hotelmen of the province, met with the cabinet in February 1911 and requested an extension of the hours of sale, they received a respectful hearing but little more.[44]

The Social and Moral Reform Council continued to press for a provincial prohibition law,[45] but to no avail. For many who wished to bring an end to the liquor traffic, or secure other desirable reforms, direct legislation became increasingly attractive. The initiative, referendum and recall had been adopted in several

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in advance of public opinion, for in 1909 the act was amended to extend the hours of sale in cities by one-half hour, and to permit clubs to sell liquor. (Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8-9 Edw. VII, Chapter 14).

[43] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to T. Miller, 10 October 1910, p. 48327.

[44] *Leader*, 2 February 1911.

[45] *Ibid.*, 25 October 1911.

American states and interest in this political innovation had quickly spread to the prairies.[46] Proponents of direct legislation claimed that under existing conditions political power had passed into the hands of a privileged minority, and that only through the adoption of the initiative, referendum and recall could legislatures again be made truly responsive to the will of the people. Governments would no longer be able to defy public opinion, or grant special concessions, franchises or subsidies that were not in the public interest. Bribery and corruption and the influence of the party "machine" would all diminish, and elected representatives would be more inclined to express their own opinions. Public life would be elevated to a higher plane and made more attractive to "good men." As well, it was confidently believed that direct participation in the legislative process would have a beneficial effect upon the electorate, and particularly those of foreign birth, by stimulating their interest in and knowledge of public affairs. Direct legislation was often portrayed almost as a panacea, whereby all economic and social reforms desired by the people might be implemented.[47]

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[46] For a more detailed study of the spread of direct legislation to Canada, see W. L. Morton, "Direct Legislation and the Origins of the Progressive Movement", *Canadian Historical Review,* Vol. XXV No. 3 (September, 1944), pp. 279-88; D. S. Spafford, "'Independent' Politics in Saskatchewan Before the Nonpartisan League," *Saskatchewan History,* Vol. XVIII, No. 1 (Winter, 1965), pp. 3-7; E. Chambers, "The Referendum and the Plebiscite," *Politics in Saskatchewan,* pp. 59-65.

[47] S. J. Farmer, *The Reign of the People: A Brief Summary of*

By the spring of 1912 direct legislation had been endorsed by both political parties in Alberta, by the Liberals in Manitoba, and by the organized farmers in all three provinces.[48] A Saskatchewan Direct Legislation League was organized on the eve of the 1912 election to popularize this new political innovation,[49] and both parties promised to introduce the initiative and referendum if they were successful at the polls.[50] True to his pledge, Scott indicated to the House when it next met in November 1912 that a direct legislation measure would be brought down during the session. It was a new departure, and might involve certain risks, but he agreed with William Jennings Bryan that "the people have the right to make their own mistakes."[51] The executive of the Saskatchewan Direct

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the Case for Direct Legislation (Winnipeg: Direct Legislation Leagues of Manitoba and Saskatchewan, n.d.); R. L. Scott, *Direct Legislation or the Initiative and Referendum. What It Is And Why We Need It* (Winnipeg: Grain Growers' Guide, n.d.).

[48] W. L. Morton, "Direct Legislation", pp. 282-85.

[49] *Leader*, 10 May 1912. The president of the new organization was William Trant, a Regina magistrate who was also actively interested in ameliorating social conditions in the city. Under his leadership a Regina Bureau of Public Welfare was established in 1913 to co-ordinate the activities of all voluntary welfare agencies in the city. (Drake, p. 151.) J. K. McInnis, editor of the Regina *Standard*, was vice-president and C. A. Brothers of Moose Jaw secretary. Among the others chosen to serve on the executive were three prominent Grain Growers, C. A. Dunning, J. E. Paynter and John Evans.

[50] *The Conservative Policy is the People's Popular Policy* (n.p., 1912?), *Premier Scott's Address to the Electors of Saskatchewan.*

[51] *Guide*, 27 November 1912.

Legislation League met with the Premier on 3 December to present a draft bill for his consideration,[52] and a week later the measure was presented to the House.

It stipulated that, with two exceptions, any bill passed by the Legislature would not take effect for ninety days, during which time the bill could be referred to the electorate if 5 per cent of the voters so petitioned. A measure granting supply could not be referred to the voters, and any bill might come into effect at once if it received the support of two-thirds of the members of the Legislature. Legislation could also be proposed by means of an initiative petition signed by 8 per cent of the voters. If the proposed measure did not involve any grant or charge upon the public revenue, and if it was certified by the Attorney-General as being within provincial jurisdiction, then it would be enacted at the next session of the Legislature, or submitted to a vote of the electors and, if approved, then enacted by the Legislature.[53]

The bill received unanimous approval in principle in the Legislature. The chief criticism offered by the Leader of the Opposition concerned the omission of measures involving the expenditure of public funds.[54] Liberal and Conservative speakers alike agreed that direct legislation involved a significant constitutional departure from the British parliamentary system, but as W. F. A. Turgeon optimistically declared, "the British Constitution was the most elastic in the world, and could readily accommodate itself to the application of direct legislation in Saskatchewan."[55]

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[52] *Leader*, 4 December 1912.

[53] *Ibid.*, 11 December 1912. The percentages for both the referendum and initiative petitions were left blank when the bill was introduced and settled on later in committee stage. (*Ibid.*, 6 January 1913.)

Privately, Scott and his colleagues were not as certain that direct legislation and the British parliamentary system were compatible:

> We have found upon coming to close quarters with the question that to bring into force the principles of the referendum and the initiative under the British Constitution is by no means a simple matter. Our position is very different from that of ... any of the States of the American Union ... under our system, as you know, if a public measure meets defeat in the Legislature it means the defeat of the Government. Now suppose a Bill of this class which is introduced by the Government and carried by a majority in the Legislature meets defeat when voted upon by the people in a referendum. If the Cabinet is not obliged to resign, what becomes of Cabinet responsibility? On the other hand, if the Cabinet is obliged to resign, the fact will be that in practically every referendum the main question will be the maintenance or defeat of the Government and every referendum will be a purely political

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[54] W. B. Willoughby originally took the position that there was no constitutional obstacle to allowing a referendum on "supply." (*Ibid.*, 18 December 1912.) Later in the session he modified his stand by suggesting that the people should at least be able to vote on all questions of supply "exclusive of the fixed charges of the government." (*Ibid.*, 6 January 1913.)

[55] *Ibid.*, 18 December 1912.

election just as much as is a general election.[56]

The government's increasingly cautious attitude toward this innovation became more apparent when the Legislature resumed debate on the direct legislation bill after the Christmas recess. On 9 January, the day on which it was reported from committee, another bill was introduced and passed which provided that until the Direct Legislation Act had received the affirmative vote of at least 30 per cent of the electorate in a referendum to be held during 1913, it would not come into effect.[57] W. B. Willoughby and the Conservatives accepted this without comment or criticism. S. J. Farmer, provincial organizer of the Direct Legislation League, did not.

Farmer publicly declared that the terms of the Direct Legislation Act fell far short of those requested by proponents of this reform. The draft bill which the League had submitted to the cabinet had provided that "emergency measures" might go into effect immediately if a two-thirds majority of the Legislature declared their enactment to be necessary "for the public peace, health or safety." Such measures were still to be subject to a referendum and franchises, bond guarantees and subsidies were specifically excluded from this emergency category. The government had so transformed this clause that any bill could be enacted at once if it received a two-thirds vote in the Legislature. The exemption of money bills was also regrettable, since this meant that "the public purse is not to be controlled by the people."[58]

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[56] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to E. F. Woolford, 19 December 1912, p. 32827.

[57] *Leader*, 10 January 1913; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 3 Geo. V, Chapter 3.

Farmer complained too that the Act contained no provision for the distribution of a publicity pamphlet, and that supporters of direct legislation would be unfairly handicapped by the requirement that an affirmative vote of 30 per cent of the electorate be secured before the Act would come into effect. The figures for the last provincial election showed that out of a total of 151,491 names on the voters' lists, 49,841 ballots had been cast for Liberal candidates, and 37,742 for their opponents. If the government, with all the resources at its command in a general election had obtained less than 33 per cent of the possible vote, Farmer argued, then "... the percentage of affirmative votes required to pass the Direct Legislation Bill is almost a prohibitive one."[59]

To this Premier Scott replied that the measure embodied the "vital principle" of direct legislation. The initiative and referendum were not in operation anywhere else in the British Empire, and he believed that it would be better to

> cultivate the principle in Saskatchewan by giving the people the practice of it in respect of a class of subjects, which hold the least danger of the use of it operating to hamper

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[58] *Guide*, 29 January 1913.

[59] *Ibid.*; AS, Walter Scott Papers, S. J. Farmer to Scott, 15 January 1913, p. 32830.

> and upset the accustomed convenient processes of Government in a way to breed distrust in the radical scheme at the outset, rather than to endanger it by providing that not even a postage stamp could be bought for Government purposes until a referendum vote had been taken, which is the unlimited application that you contend for.[60]

Scott was willing to compromise on the matter of the percentage of votes necessary to bring the Direct Legislation Act into operation. If 25 per cent "or even a lesser percentage if pretty evenly distributed over the Province" was polled in favour of the Act he would recommend that the Legislature accept this as an accurate indication that Saskatchewan voters favoured the adoption of the initiative and referendum.[61]

The Social and Moral Reform Council endorsed the Direct Legislation Act early in February and urged that a concentrated effort be made to secure a large vote when the referendum took place.[62] The Grain Growers passed a similar resolution at their convention in Saskatoon, but only after a lengthy debate. On the second day of the convention a resolution was introduced calling upon the S.G.G.A. to enter politics, but one of the delegates, C. A. Dunning, moved an amendment to the effect that the aims of the farmers could be better achieved through direct legislation. The amended resolution was carried by a narrow margin. Next day the convention accepted the Direct Legislation Act and pledged the S.G.G.A. to work for its adoption on the condition that the government agree to bring the bill into force if it received a simple majority vote in the referendum, and permit the amendment of any of the provisions of the bill through the initiative.[63]

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[60] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to S. J. Farmer, 31 January 1913, pp. 32832-33.

[61] *Ibid.*, p. 32833. Scott's letter was published in the *Grain Growers' Guide*, 12 February 1913.

[62] *Leader*, 7 February 1913.

The Premier and his colleagues declined to make any such commitment, even when pressed by the Direct Legislation League to do so,[64] and it seemed for a time that the League executive would refuse to support the bill at all. Not until its annual meeting in Regina on 17 June 1913 did the League decide to accept the Direct Legislation Act and co-operate with other organizations in securing a favourable vote in the referendum. It was agreed that the vote should be held late in the year, well past the farmers' busy season, and a committee was named to convey this opinion to the Premier.[65]

The government announced in October that the referendum would take place on 27 November 1913.[66] The Direct Legislation League issued an appeal to the organized farmers, trades and labour councils, ministerial associations and branches of the Social and Moral Reform Council to work together to ensure that the necessary vote was polled.[67] The S.G.G.A. made arrangements to hold a series of meetings in the country districts, and local committees were formed in cities and towns across the province.[68] The Temperance and Moral Reform Department of the Methodist Church joined in the campaign, and declared the last Sunday before polling to be "Direct Legislation Sunday." All Methodist ministers in Saskatchewan were urged to appeal to their congregations for a large vote.[69] Clergymen and others who favoured direct legislation were quick to point out that if the initiative and referendum were adopted in Saskatchewan, prohibition and other necessary reforms might soon be achieved.[70]

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[63] *Guide*, 26 February 1913.

[64] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, S. J. Farmer to Turgeon, 18 February 1913; G. Langley to S. J. Farmer, 12 March 1913.

[65] *Guide*, 25 June 1913.

[66] *Leader*, 8 October 1913.

Direct legislation supporters in Regina were better organized than in any other part of the province. Committees were chosen to canvass each ward, and special attention was paid to the city's cosmopolitan east side.[71] This district was popularly known as "Germantown," though only half the residents were of German origin, the remainder belonging to some twenty-one other ethnic groups. They lived under conditions which had long appalled reformers. Many of the six hundred houses in Germantown were poorly built, and more than half had no sewer or water connections. When J. S. Woodsworth undertook a social survey of the city in 1913, he found that the only recreational facilities for foreign immigrants were dance halls, beer parlours and pool halls. Gambling, prostitution and illegal liquor selling flourished in Germantown despite repeated attempts by the local branch of the Social and Moral Reform Council to stamp out these activities.[72]

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[67] *Province*, 30 October 1913.

[68] *Leader*, 25 October 1913, 6 November 1913; *Saskatchewan Herald* (Battleford), 21 November 1913; *Prairie News* (Govan), 28 November 1913.

[69] *Leader*, 17 November 1913, 22 November 1913.

[70] *Standard*, 30 October 1913; *Leader*, 17 November 1913.

[71] *Leader*, 6 November 1913; *Province*, 8 November 1913.

The Presbyterians and Methodists had established mission churches in Regina's east end,[73] and it was one of these, Wesley Methodist Church, which took the initiative in organizing a campaign to secure a favourable majority for direct legislation in Ward One. The work was not begun without a certain feeling of trepidation. Not all supporters of direct legislation shared the belief that the initiative and referendum would help to assimilate the foreigner by educating him in the responsibilities of Canadian citizenship. There were some, apparently, who feared that the innovation might put too much power in the hands of these "uneducated people."[74]

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[72] Drake, pp. 154-56.

[73] *Ibid.*, p. 153.

[74] *Leader*, 6 November 1913.

Outside Regina a general apathy prevailed, despite the efforts of the Direct Legislation League, with its limited funds, the *Grain Growers' Guide* and other supporters to arouse public interest in the measure. There was little apparent opposition to direct legislation, though it was widely assumed that the Licensed Victuallers' Association was conducting a quiet campaign against it.[75] *L'Association Catholique Franco-Canadienne*, founded in 1912 by Saskatchewan's French-speaking minority to preserve its language and culture, openly opposed the Direct Legislation Act. If the initiative and referendum were adopted, French Catholics were warned, adversaries of Catholicism and the French language could arouse the passion and fanaticism of the majority and pass any law they desired. Through its newspaper, *Le Patriote de l'Ouest*, the A.C.F.C. urged that the bill be defeated on 27 November. The *Deutsche Katholische Volksverein*, an association of German Catholics, adopted a similar stand.[76]

During the first three weeks of November the government inserted advertisements in every newspaper in the province, advising voters of the date of polling and indicating that copies of the Direct Legislation Act were available from Regina upon request. Apart from carrying out these necessary duties, the government held itself aloof from the whole matter, as did the

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[75] *Ibid.*, 30 October 1913; *Standard*, 18 November 1913.

[76] Huel, pp. 55-57.

Opposition. Some Liberal supporters, apparently not knowing what position they should take on the issue, wrote to the government for direction, but Scott assured them that there was no political significance attached to the vote.[77] To a member of the "inner circle" of the party in Moose Jaw the Premier was more candid:

> My view is that nothing ought to be done by the Liberal party which would give any one a chance to say that the party did not support the Direct Legislation principle. The labour element as well as the average man who considers himself independently minded as regards public affairs ... are warm advocates of Direct Legislation and I think it would be detrimental to the interests of the Liberal party if these people obtained the idea that the Liberal party had not stood by the legislation which we framed last winter and which is now to be voted on.
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> At the same time the more I have been compelled to become acquainted with the whole question and the way in which the initiative and referendum would very likely operate the more honestly dubious I have become as to the effects likely to be produced in relation to the public welfare. My inmost conviction is that it will be far better for the Province if the principle is not sufficiently sustained at the polls to bring our Direct Legislation Act into force.[78]

These sentiments were not shared by that independent-minded member of the cabinet, George Langley. In an address to the Metropolitan Brotherhood in Regina he appealed to all supporters of direct legislation, irrespective of party affiliation, to work for the implementation of the Act. He spoke in glowing terms of this "latest scheme of democracy" and predicted that if the measure was endorsed on 27 November "such progress will be made that within a short time there will not be one single question on which the people will not have the opportunity of voting."[79]

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[77] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to B. S. Ross, 29 October 1913, p. 32849.

[78] *Ibid.*, Scott to A. Hitchcock, 15 November 1913, p. 32850.

Early returns indicated that the turnout on polling day was not large, less than 10 per cent in fact. In the country districts the Direct Legislation Act carried by a margin of ten to one, in the towns by six to one and in the cities by two to one.[80] It was claimed that the liquor interests had thoroughly canvassed Regina's east end, warning the foreigners that direct legislation meant "no drink" and that this accounted for the substantial vote against the measure in that city.[81] A large vote against direct legislation was also polled in Saskatoon, and here too the hotelmen were blamed.[82] The official returns showed that 26,696, or 16.52 per cent of the 161,561 persons on the voters' lists had endorsed the direct legislation bill, and 4,897 voted against it.[83]

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[79] *Province*, 17 November 1913.

[80] *Leader*, 28 November 1913; *Province*, 28 November 1913; *Standard*, 28 November 1913.

[81] *Standard*, 27 November 1913.

[82] *Saskatoon Star*, 28 November 1913.

[83] *Saskatchewan Gazette*, Vol. X, No. 3, 14 February 1914, pp. 4-5. The final returns showed that the Direct Legislation Act was approved by a vote of 647-280 in Regina and 340-272 in Saskatoon. A large vote against direct legislation was also polled in Vonda, where the Act carried by a margin of 397-294, and in Humboldt, where 344 votes were cast in favour of the Act, and 334 in opposition.

Supporters of direct legislation attributed the poor response to indifference on the part of the electorate, but the government's role in the taking of the special vote did not escape criticism. It was claimed that the six weeks' notice of the date of polling had not allowed enough time for the distribution of literature or for the holding of meetings to rally support for the measure. The government was also criticized for not giving sufficient publicity to the referendum. Many voters had not even known where to cast their ballot.[84] In spite of these handicaps the direct legislation bill had been approved by a large majority, and its supporters called upon the government to bring the Act into force.[85]

This Premier Scott refused to do. "... I cannot see how it can be successfully argued," he wrote to the secretary of an S.G.G.A. local, "that such a small minority of the people as came out to vote on 27th November should be held sufficient to bring into force such a radical principle in our constitution as is involved in Direct Legislation."[86] The Direct Legislation League, the S.G.G.A. and the S.A.R.M. passed resolutions at their annual conventions in 1914 urging that another referendum be held at the time of the next provincial election,[87] but Scott gave no indication that he would comply with this request. A shortage of funds forced the League to suspend active organization work in 1914,[88] and little more was heard of direct legislation in Saskatchewan.

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[84] *Standard*, 27 November 1913; *Province*, 28 November 1913; AS, Walter Scott Papers, Dinsmore G.G.A. to Scott, 6 December 1913; p. 32855.

[85] *Leader*, 28 November 1913; *Guide*, 24 December 1913.

[86] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to G. Pensom, 15 December 1913, p. 32858.

In the meantime a new issue had captured the public imagination: the "banish-the-bar" crusade. Dissatisfied with their efforts to remove the bars through local option, and realizing that there was not yet sufficient public sentiment in favour of complete prohibition, Saskatchewan temperance reformers had decided to press for legislation which would close all the bars in the province at a single stroke.[89] The banish-the-bar crusade was launched on 23 November 1913 at a mass meeting in Regina. It was, according to the *Leader*, "one of the most enthusiastic temperance rallies ever held in the city," and it was the first at which Protestant and Catholic clergymen stood together on a public platform and denounced the evils of the liquor traffic. Bishop O. E. Mathieu of Regina gave a stirring address, and pledged that the priests in his diocese would actively support the campaign to abolish the bars.[90]

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[87] *Evening Province and Standard* (Regina) [hereafter cited as *Evening Province*], 11 February 1914; *Guide*, 18 February 1914; *Leader*, 7 March 1914.

[88] *Leader*, 20 May 1914, 12 February 1915.

[89] The Social and Moral Reform Council became dissatisfied with the working out of the local option law, and decided in 1911 to take no further part in local option campaigns. No local option contests were held in 1911. Locally sponsored contests took place in 1912, but these were mostly favourable to the liquor interests. (Pinno, pp. 28-29.)

The same spirit of enthusiasm was apparent at the annual convention of the Social and Moral Reform Council which opened in Regina on 25 November. More than three hundred delegates gathered in the Y.M.C.A. auditorium, decorated for the occasion with large banners proclaiming that "Saskatchewan Must Go Dry," to hear speaker after speaker express confidence that a banish-the-bar campaign would gain widespread support in the province. As Bishop J. A. Newnham of Prince Albert put it:

> Though this may not go as far as some wish yet I think it is as far as practicable at present and a long step in the right direction. If we can abolish the bar and so end the treating system I feel sure we shall have ... dealt a great blow to the liquor traffic. Moreover, we shall have the support of the vast number who, while not desiring total prohibition yet wished to be free from temptation of the bar and treating.[91]

The stirring address which Bishop Mathieu had delivered a few days before was warmly praised. Rev. G. E. Lloyd, Principal of Emmanuel College in Saskatoon and chairman of the convention, called it "the greatest aid ever given the ... cause of temperance in the whole province." He predicted that with the support of the Roman Catholic Church success was assured.[92]

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[90] *Leader*, 24 November 1913.

[91] *Ibid.*, 26 November 1913.

[92] *Ibid.*

The delegates organized a special committee of the Social and Moral Reform Council, the Committee of One Hundred, to coordinate the banish-the-bar campaign, and drew up a platform which was presented to Premier Scott when he and the Attorney-General arrived at the convention later in the afternoon. This platform demanded that the government enact legislation to abolish all bar and club licences in the province, and submit this legislation to the people for approval at the time of the next municipal elections. If the bill received a majority of the votes polled it would then come into effect at the end of the current licence year. The wholesale liquor stores would be left undisturbed, subject to local option, so that those who were determined to obtain liquor could do so without breaking the law. Premier Scott assured the convention that he personally favoured the course it had adopted and that its requests would receive the careful consideration of his government.[93]

The question of closing the bars was raised in the Legislature a few days later. Gerhard Ens, the Liberal member for Rosthern, denounced the hotel bar as a menace to the community, and suggested that it might be replaced by a system of licensed cafes such as were found in a number of European countries. The worst evils of the liquor traffic were centred in the bar trade, and with the elimination of the bars drunkenness would decrease and the treating habit disappear. Richard Forsyth, another Liberal back-bencher, endorsed these views and urged that the question of abolishing the bars be put to a vote of the people.[94]

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[93] *Ibid.*

The legal committee of the Social and Moral Reform Council prepared a draft bill providing for the abolition of the bars by means of a plebiscite to be held at the time of the municipal elections in December 1914, and submitted it to the cabinet.[95] The Licensed Victuallers' Association was also busy, and a delegation of hotelmen urged the Premier to make no changes in the liquor law. They contended that the Liquor Licence Act was the best of its kind in Canada, and that most hotels in the province were conducted in a manner which reflected credit on the business. Recent amendments to the Act had put the hotel owners to considerable expense in making improvements to buildings and equipment, and this investment would be jeopardized by any radical changes in the law. The hotelmen claimed too that the local option contests held a few days before, in which only six of twenty-six communities had voted to remove the bars, demonstrated that most people preferred the existing licence system.[96]

The government was apparently unmoved by the arguments of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, for on 15 December Premier

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[94] *Ibid.*, 29 November 1913.

[95] *Ibid.*, 12 December 1913.

[96] *Ibid.*

Scott introduced legislation closing the bars and providing for a plebiscite on the question "Are you in favour of the bringing into force of the Abolition of the Bar Act?" The executive of the Social and Moral Reform Council subsequently met with the Premier to discuss this proposed legislation.[97] It is not entirely clear what transpired at these meetings, but on 19 December Scott announced to the House that the government had decided to withdraw the two bills because the executive had given only "grudging assent" to the conditions under which the plebiscite was to be held. According to the Premier, there had been two points of disagreement between himself and the temperance people. They had asked that the municipal franchise be used, but he insisted that since the question was of interest to the whole province, the plebiscite should be held on the provincial voters' lists.[98]

The other point of disagreement concerned the maximum affirmative vote that would be necessary to bring the bill into force. The government had not wished to be responsible for the enforcement of such radical legislation unless it were shown that a reasonable percentage of the people were behind it. Premier Scott initially proposed that a vote of 50,000 be required. The executive objected to this on the grounds that inclement weather in December might make it impossible to secure a large turnout at the polls, and suggested instead a minimum vote of 30,000 and a 10 per cent majority. This was unacceptable to the Premier, and he then offered a minimum of 40,000 as a compromise. After some discussion the temperance delegation apparently accepted this figure, but Scott later claimed in the House that their consent had not been as "hearty and cheerful" as he would have liked. It did not appear to him that the Social and Moral Reform Council would conduct a sufficiently spirited campaign to justify bringing the question before the people in a plebiscite.[99]

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[97] *Saskatoon Star*, 16 December 1913, 18 December 1913.

[98] *Leader*, 20 December 1913. The executive of the Social and Moral Reform Council doubtless anticipated that property owners would be more likely to vote in favour of closing the bars than the wider provincial electorate. (See, for example, interview with Rev. G. E. Lloyd in *Saskatoon Star*, 12 December 1913.)

Premier Scott's action came as a surprise to the executive of the Social and Moral Reform Council. They insisted that the compromise figure had been acceptable to both sides, and that the Premier had agreed to amend the legislation accordingly.[100] There were some who suspected that the government's change of heart had been motivated by political considerations. Rev. G. E. Lloyd was one of these, and he later claimed that the decision to withdraw the bills had been taken at a Liberal caucus held in the Legislative Buildings after the temperance delegation had departed.[101]

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[99] *Leader*, 20 December 1913, 22 December 1913; *Province*, 20 December 1913.

[100] *Leader*, 20 December 1913, 31 December 1913; Spence, p. 432.

[101] *Leader*, 10 December 1914.

Supporters of the banish-the-bar movement were not disheartened by this apparent setback. "If the legislation is not passed this year or next year," C. B. Keenleyside, the general secretary of the Banish-the-Bar Committee, declared in a newspaper interview, "it will be at some future time, for the bar must go, and it will go."[102] The Committee of One Hundred met in Regina early in 1914 and again demanded that the government hold a plebiscite on a bill to abolish the bars, this time in July 1915.[103] Premier Scott gave no indication that he would comply with this request, and the temperance forces launched a province-wide campaign of education and propaganda. Through its official newspaper, the *Banish-the-Bar Crusader*, which first appeared in March 1914, and through canvassers in the field, the Committee sought to rally support for its cause.

The public response to this campaign was generally sympathetic, though there were some notable exceptions. The S.G.G.A. and its separate women's organization, the W.G.G.A., the Orange Lodge, the S.A.R.M., the Saskatchewan Educational Association, the Saskatchewan Conference of the Methodist Church and the Saskatchewan Synods of the Presbyterian and Anglican Churches all endorsed the efforts of the Banish-the-Bar Committee to end the retail sale of liquor in the province.[104] The Qu'Appelle Synod of the Anglican Church defeated a similar resolution by a narrow margin.[105] On the other hand, the Regina and Moose Jaw Trades and Labour Councils flatly refused to co-operate with the Banish-the-Bar Committee.[106] The *Deutsch-Canadischer Provinzialverband von Saskatchewan,* a federation of provincial German societies, condemned at its founding convention in Regina the "aggressive and unscrupulous agitation which aims to ruin financially a great number of our fellow citizens, and to restrict personal liberty." The German-Canadian Provincial Alliance instead urged hotelkeepers to adopt the German system of licensed cafes to which Gerhard Ens had earlier drawn attention in the Legislature.[107]

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[102] *Ibid.*, 20 December 1913.

[103] *Ibid.*, 14 January 1914.

The Catholic Church seems to have taken no active part in the campaign to close the bars, notwithstanding Bishop Mathieu's pledge that the clergy under his jurisdiction would be in the forefront of the temperance movement. In Regina, for instance, the various Catholic parishes did not participate in the special "Campaign Sunday" ceremonies on 14 June 1914, when temperance speakers occupied many church pulpits to inaugurate the banish-the-bar crusade in that city.[108] There were no doubt many Catholics in the province who wished to curb the liquor traffic, but their enthusiasm for temperance reform may well have been dampened by signs that many reformers were as bitterly opposed to the separate school as to the hotel bar.

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[104] Pinno, pp. 45-46.

[105] *Leader,* 13 June 1914.

[106] W. J. C. Cherwinski, "The Formative Years of the Trade Union Movement in Saskatchewan, 1905-1920" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 1966), pp. 74-75.

[107] *Leader,* 26 March 1914.

An amendment to the School Act passed in 1913 which explicitly required that ratepayers of the religious minority support their separate schools fanned the flames of religious discord which had remained dormant in Saskatchewan since 1905. The Presbyterian and Baptist Churches officially condemned this amendment and Premier Scott's own pastor, Rev. Murdoch MacKinnon, publicly rebuked the government from the pulpit of Knox Presbyterian Church in May 1914.[109]

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[108] *Ibid.*, 15 June 1914. Other members of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Saskatchewan did not share Bishop Mathieu's apparent enthusiasm for the banish-the-bar movement. Bishop A. Pascal of Prince Albert and Abbot Bruno Doerfler of St. Peter's Abbey, Muenster, favoured the cafe system. (Pinno, p. 19.)

[109] Huel, pp. 91-95. Premier Scott had introduced this amendment to clarify the law after an appeal court ruled in 1911 that each ratepayer had the option of supporting either the public or the separate school. Previous to this ruling it had been held that the members of the minority were legally compelled to support the separate school, though the School Act was not explicit in this regard. To prevent the possibility of ratepayers simply choosing to pay their taxes to the system with the lower rate of assessment, the School Act was amended to make it mandatory for the minority to support its separate schools. A companion measure, compelling companies to divide their school taxes in the same proportion as the total taxes of the school district were divided between the public and separate systems, was also to draw the fire of militant Protestants such as MacKinnon, but never to the same extent as the first bill did.

Two months later R. J. Gibson, Provincial Grand Master of the Orange Lodge, told 4,000 Orangemen celebrating the "Glorious Twelfth" in Swift Current that the Lodge would make the "school question" the main issue in the next provincial election, and exert all its influence to drive from office the government which had given Saskatchewan the worst system of separate schools in the whole Dominion.[110] Such outbursts as these did little to foster closer co-operation between Catholics and Protestants in the common cause of temperance reform.

W. B. Willoughby and the Conservatives at first remained aloof from the campaign to end the retail sale of liquor in Saskatchewan. Conservative newspapers criticized the government for withdrawing the banish-the-bar legislation in December 1913,[111] but the Leader of the Opposition offered no comment at the time. Willoughby later explained to a gathering of party supporters in Regina that he had not wished to embarrass the government. He believed that temperance should not be made a "football of party politics" and he would not "bring the question into the political arena unless the government failed to meet the needs of the matter."[112]

Several months later the Conservative leader delivered a scathing attack against the Catholic Church and the hotelmen of the province in an address at Swift Current. He complained that Catholics had voted solidly Liberal in the last provincial election and in two recent by-elections in North Qu'Appelle and Rosthern, and declared that "the people of the province would want to know why any denomination found it fit and proper to give its united support to any political party." Willoughby also hinted that a corrupt alliance existed between the liquor interests and the government and questioned whether any special concessions had been granted in return for political support.[113]

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[110] *Leader*, 13 July 1914.

[111] *Province*, 20 December 1913, *Saskatoon Star*, 23 December 1913.

[112] *Evening Province*, 12 January 1914.

It was, in all, a curious speech, but one calculated to revive the sagging fortunes of the Conservative party in Saskatchewan. As one newspaper commented in praising Willoughby's forthright stand,

> Not until the Conservative party in this province takes a strong and advanced position on the many important questions now before the electorate can it hope for success. There is nothing to be gained by conciliatory methods. The Conservative party has everything to gain and nothing to lose by boldly declaring its opposition to such interests as are already openly opposed to it.[114]

Willoughby's strictures against clerical interference in politics would appeal to latent Protestant suspicions of the Catholic Church. Similarly, the Conservative leader no doubt anticipated that his strong denunciation of the liquor interests would be popular among temperance people, though if this were so it is difficult to understand why he did not go farther and openly endorse the banish-the-bar campaign.

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[113] *Leader*, 30 July 1914. These hints that the Scott government was in league with the liquor interests were not new. Conservative newspapers had charged during the 1912 provincial election that hotelkeepers were being coerced into contributing to the Liberal campaign fund, and W. B. Willoughby repeated these accusations at an annual party convention in Yorkton in December 1913. (*Standard*, 15 June 1912; *Province*, 22 June 1912, 3 December 1913.)

[114] *Evening Province*, 30 July 1914.

By the summer of 1914, then, the Banish-the-Bar Committee had attracted support from many quarters, but the Scott government seemed no more willing to introduce legislation prohibiting the retail sale of liquor than it had been six months earlier. The war would soon change all that, for it created an emotional atmosphere which greatly aided the temperance cause. Prohibition and patriotism became synonymous. The *Banish-the-Bar Crusader* declared that the bars had become meeting places for aliens and breeding centres of sedition.[115] A temperance speaker told his Regina audience that "it made his blood boil ... to see the Union Jack draped in these drinking places." The liquor traffic was killing or disabling men by the thousands when Canada demanded the best of its sons, and when every living person was an asset. Moreover, the liquor traffic wasted large quantities of foodstuffs which might otherwise be used to feed Canada's starving allies.[116]

The Committee of One Hundred called on the government in

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[115] Spence, pp. 433-34.

[116] *Leader*, 24 February 1915.

November 1914 to use the special powers granted it at the first wartime session of the Legislature and suspend all retail liquor licences until the end of the war.[117] Premier Scott absolutely refused to comply with this request. With winter approaching and with unemployment already a serious problem in the province, the government was not prepared to take action which might force many hotel owners to close their premises and throw their employees out of work.[118]

Premier Scott made known his government's decision on the eve of the second annual Banish-the-Bar convention in Regina. This latest rebuff to the temperance cause, and the future course of action to be followed, became the chief topics of discussion among the delegates. No one expressed more forcefully their feeling of disappointment, and their mounting sense of frustation with the treatment accorded them by the Scott government, than the president of the Banish-the-Bar Committee, Rev. G. E. Lloyd:

> We have not got one single thing from the Saskatchewan Government .... Are we going to go on tramping back and forth between conventions and the Government building year after year without any satisfaction? On the other hand, the liquor interests have been given some 80 new licenses this year. They are being encouraged, while we are being ignored. Are you satisfied? If you are not, what are you going to do?

There was only one way for the temperance people to get what they wanted, Lloyd declared, and that was through direct political action. "You must put your Conservatism in one pocket and your Liberalism in the other and be a temperance man first, last and all the time ...."[119]

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[117] *Ibid.*, 4 November 1914. The government had already proclaimed a state of total prohibition in the province's northern hinterland, an area inhabited chiefly by Indians and trappers. (*Ibid.*, 3 November 1914.)

[118] *Ibid.*, 9 December 1914.

By a unanimous vote the delegates agreed to support pledged temperance candidates irrespective of party affiliation in the next provincial election, and to nominate an independent man if no candidate in a constituency would agree to endorse the Banish-the-Bar platform. In the meantime, of course, the campaign of education and organization which had already covered more than 300 communities in the province would be continued. The convention also discussed at length the question of altering the objective of the Committee of One Hundred from one of closing the bars to total prohibition. The executive favoured such a change, but a majority of the delegates voted against it. Some expressed concern that the wider policy might not secure the same degree of support among churches and reform organizations, and others pointed out that in any event total prohibition was beyond the power of the provincial government.[120]

As the Banish-the-Bar Committee set to work obtaining pledges of support from members of the Legislature,[121] public pressure for further restriction of the liquor traffic grew stronger and stronger. Conservatives urged Premier Scott to follow the example of Manitoba and close the bars in the evenings as a war measure.[122] With large numbers of soldiers concentrated at Regina and other points in the province, W. B. Willoughby declared that it was necessary "... to safeguard the young men who have enlisted and who by reason of being away from home, and with leisure time on their hands, are often subjected to severe temptation."[123]

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[119] *Ibid.*, 10 December 1914.

[120] *Ibid.*

[121] See, for example, AS, J. E. Bradshaw Papers, W. J. Stewart to Bradshaw, 22 February 1915. Voters were also asked to sign a pledge, the elector's pledge, agreeing to support the banish-the-bar

The chief Liberal newspaper in Saskatchewan openly condemned the Scott government for its "failure ... to take some definite action, some forward step in this vitally important matter ..." The *Leader* appealed to the Premier to cancel all liquor licences in the province, or at least to shorten the hours of sale and instruct the Liquor Licence Commission to refuse to grant any new licences for the duration of the war.[124] The Banish-the-Bar Committee made a similar request, and asked as well that the

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movement irrespective of politics and to vote only for the candidate who subscribed to the candidate's pledge. (*Leader*, 29 January 1915.) Principal Lloyd told a temperance rally in February 1915 that the Banish-the-Bar Committee hoped to secure the pledges of 5,000 voters in the province. (*Ibid.*, 24 February 1915.)

[122] *Province*, 22 December 1914; *Evening Province*, 27 January 1915.

[123] *Province*, 2 December 1914.

[124] *Leader*, 30 December 1914.

government introduce legislation at the next session to permit a vote on the question of closing the bars at the time of the municipal elections in December 1915.[125] Premier Scott did announce that no new licences would be granted during the current licence year, but beyond this he was not prepared to go. He remained convinced, publicly at least, that it would be unwise to introduce any "radical reform measures" at a time when the province was experiencing "unexampled economic troubles and curtailment of credit with a great deal of unemployed ...."[126] This explanation failed to satisfy the executive of the Banish-the-Bar Committee, and they vigorously condemned the Scott government for its failure to take more drastic action.[127]

Two months passed without the Premier or his colleagues giving any indication that they would take further steps to curtail the liquor traffic. Then, on 10 March, George Langley hinted to the S.A.R.M. convention in Saskatoon that the government would soon meet the wishes of the temperance people.[128] Eight days later, in a speech at Oxbow, Premier Scott announced that effective 1 April all bars would be closed in the evenings, and that on 1 July all hotel and club licences would be abolished for the duration of the war, and the wholesale liquor business taken over by the government. The question of reopening the bars would be decided by a referendum to be held after the war, but not earlier than December 1916. A government liquor store, or "dispensary," would be established in each town or city where a wholesale liquor store currently existed, and in other districts one might be opened by majority vote of the municipal electors. These dispensaries would reamin in existence at least until 1919, when, upon a petition signed by 25 per cent of those who had voted in the preceding provincial election, a province-wide vote might be held on the question of retaining or abolishing the government liquor store system.

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[125] *Ibid.*, 9 January 1915.

[126] *Ibid.*

[127] C. B. Keenleyside, for example, told a Regina audience that he could not understand how economic conditions in Saskatchewan could be any worse than in Russia, a country impoverished by war, where the manufacture and sale of vodka had already been prohibited. (*Ibid.*, 25 January 1915.)

[128] *C.A.R.*, 1915, p. 666.

Scott promised to summon the House as soon as possible to enact the ncessary legislation. he admitted that there were still many details to be worked out, but made it clear that compensation to hotel owners for the loss of their liquor licences was not one of these. It had already been decided, somewhat reluctantly, that no such compensation would be provided. If, on the other hand, any practicable way could be found to assist hotel owners through the period of dislocation and readjustment which would follow the cancellation of licences, the government would be willing to give it serious consideration, so that the travelling public might be assured of decent hotel accommodation.[129]

The Premier regarded these drastic measures as a frank concession to wartime public opinion which, he confided to Senator J. H. Ross, had become so strong that "to stand still any longer meant suicide for this government."[130] The response to the new policy was so overwhelmingly favourable that one Liberal was moved to remark to Scott that "... it looks as if you had hit the nail on the head just at the right time."[131] Letters and telegrams of congratulation poured into the Premier's office. The Banish-the-Bar Committee, churches and ministerial associations, the organized farmers, druggists, teachers, boards of trade and individual citizens all expressed their approval and Liberal, Conservative and independent newspapers alike praised the stand taken by the government.[132]

There was some criticism of the proposal to substitute government dispensaries for the wholesale liquor stores, but most temperance supporters were willing to accept the dispensaries as a temporary measure.[133] Scott admitted that he too had initially looked upon the idea of government stores with suspicion:

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[129] *Leader*, 19 March 1915.

[130] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. H. Ross, 12 April 1915, p. 13650.

[131] *Ibid.*, L. Thomson to Scott, 8 April 1915, p. 48503.

[132] Pinno, pp. 58-70. Some newspapers expressed objections to the Premier's Oxbow proposals even at this early stage. The strongest criticism came from two German weeklies, *Der Courier* and *St. Peters Bote*, Muenster. Both preferred the cafe system. (*Ibid.*, pp. 70-71).

> We decided for them on two grounds, first, that to leave the wholesale business in private hands would make the administration of the no bar system difficult and, secondly, on the ground that once having decided to take strong action against the liquor traffic it was our political duty to leave no stone unturned to put a complete end to the traffic in this Province. There will be much better chance both in the referendum on the retail question and in the later referendum on the wholesale question for the temperance forces to win the day under the system which we propose which means there will be no existing liquor business or interest to cope with.[134]

W. B. Willoughby expressed guarded approval of the government's new temperance policy,[135] and it seemed for a time that it would be brought into effect without a struggle. Even those most directly affected, the hotelmen, the brewers, the wholesale liquor dealers and the wine merchants, were at first remarkably quiescent. "Of course," Premier Scott admitted, "their breath has been so completely taken that they scarcely yet know which way to look."[136] A week after the Oxbow speech the Licensed Victuallers' Association met in Regina amid rumours that many hotels proprietors, especially those from the smaller communities, wished to retaliate by closing their premises at the end of the month. The hotelmen refused to divulge their plans,[137] but their establishments did remain open for business after the government reduced the hours of sale in bars on 1 April.

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[133] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Rev. H. Dobson to Scott, 23 March 1915, pp. 48485-87; L. Thomson to Scott, 25 March 1915, p. 48501; *Leader*, 2 April 1915.

[134] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. Thomson, 31 March 1915, p. 48502.

[135] *Evening Province*, 19 March 1915.

[136] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to W. M. Martin, 24 March 1915, p. 48475.

The first signs of overt opposition to the Oxbow proposals came not from the Conservatives, or the hotelmen, but from within Premier Scott's own party. Dr. D. B. Neely, the Liberal M.P. for Humboldt, led the attack. He declared at a meeting of the Humboldt Liberal Association on 17 April that the government had no mandate for such a drastic policy and that the question should be put to a vote of the people before any legislation was introduced. Neely condemned the proposed dispensaries as "an attempt to take away private interests in the liquor trade and to confiscate it to the government's profit" and criticized the Premier for refusing to provide compensation to licence holders. A resolution embodying these sentiments was approved by the meeting and forwarded to the Premier and the Attorney General.[138]

The St. Brieux Liberal Association passed a similar resolution which claimed that the decision to close the bars without ample notice or compensation was "unfair and contrary to British fair play and justice."[139] Dr. Neely repeated his criticism of the proposed temperance legislation in a well-publicized debate with Rev. G. E. Lloyd at Humboldt, and Albert Champagne, another Liberal M.P., and Senator T. O. Davis of Prince Albert also denounced the government's action.[140] Premier Scott remained firm in the face of this mounting criticism from within his own party. He told a meeting at Vanguard on 23 April that there would be no turning back. "The government will carry through and put into operation the measures that I outlined at Oxbow or go down to defeat in the attempt."[141]

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[137] *Leader*, 25 March 1915.

[138] *Humboldt Journal*, 22 April 1915; AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, Constituency Files, J. C. King to Turgeon, 19 April 1915; Walter Scott Papers, J. C. King to Scott, 19 April 1915, pp. 48579-80.

The government's temperance policy became the main issue in a provincial by-election in Shellbrook, the first to be held in Saskatchewan since the outbreak of the war.[142] W. B. Willoughby accused the Liberals of breaking the wartime party truce by nominating a candidate in what had previously been a Conservative riding, and criticized the Oxbow proposals as undemocratic and undesirable. Willoughby made it clear that his party was opposed to the sale of liquor in government stores under any circumstances. He claimed that the whole liquor licence machinery of the province had for years been administered on partisan grounds, with liquor dealers and hotelmen actually forced to contribute to the Liberals' campaign fund, and that the dispensaries would only lead to greater political corruption. The Conservatives proposed instead to hold a referendum on the question of total prohibition at the time of the first municipal elections after the next provincial general election. If the province voted in favour, the Conservatives would introduce prohibition within a year; if not, then they would place the entire administration of the Liquor Licence Act under an independent commission free from political control. Willoughby believed that this would meet the wishes of the organized temperance forces for a vote on fair terms and still "give a reasonable time for the liquor men, wholesale and retail, to adjust themselves to new conditions and other occupations . . ."[143]

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[139] AS, Walter Scott Papers, L. Demay to Scott, 26 April 1915, p. 48593.

[140] *Evening Province*, 23 April 1915; *Leader*, 24 April 1915.

[141] *Evening Province*, 24 April 1915.

[142] *Shellbrook Chronicle*, 24 April 1915, 1 May 1915.

Although the Conservatives were prepared to go farther than Premier Scott and introduce total prohibition, Willoughby's proposals seem to have aroused little enthusiasm among supporters of the temperance cause. Some regarded the Conservative policy as "a straight bid for the whiskey vote" and noted that the referendum would be held while the liquor interests were still in business and able to mount a strong campaign against prohibition. Others argued that the people of Saskatchewan wanted immediate action to curtail the liquor traffic and complained that the Conservative policy put the matter off too far in the future.[144]

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[143] *Evening Province*, 28 April 1915.

Members of the Banish-the-Bar Committee campaigned on behalf of the government candidate in Shellbrook, E. S. Clinch. The three disgruntled Liberals, Neely, Champagne and Davis, supported T. A. Borthwick, who ran as an independent Liberal opposed to the "autocratic action" of Premier Scott and his colleagues in Regina.[145] The contest was a spirited one, but the Liberal candidate won by a wide margin. He polled 1,667 votes to 581 for A. F. Agnew, the Conservative, and only 71 for Borthwick.[146] The government hailed this resounding Liberal victory in what had previously been a Conservative riding as proof of the popularity of its temperance policy.[147] Premier Scott confidently predicted that when the legislation was put to a vote in the House,"... there will not be one single defection amongst our supporters."[148]

The second wartime session of the Saskatchewan Legislature opened in Regina on 10 May 1915. Lieutenant-Governor G. W. Brown outlined the government's proposed temperance legislation in the Speech from the Throne, and in the debate which followed the Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues demanded that the measure be submitted to a vote of the people. Scott refused, claiming that a referendum would involve needless expense since it was a foregone conclusion what the result would be.[149]

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[144] *Leader*, 29 April 1915.

[145] *Evening Province*, 3 May 1915; *Humboldt Journal*, 6 May 1915; AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, election address issued by T. A. Borthwick to the electors of Shellbrook, 29 April 1915.

[146] *Legislative Directory*, p. 144.

[147] *Leader*, 11 May 1915; AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. J. Bowlen, 14 May 1915, p. 48648.

[148] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to J. A. Cross, 15 May 1915, p. 48650.

On 18 May Scott tabled the report of a royal commission which had earlier been appointed to investigate the working of the dispensary system in South Carolina, the only jurisdiction in North America where it had been put into operation. The commissioners, Principal E. H. Oliver of the Presbyterian Theological College in Saskatoon, and J. F. Bole, M.L.A., found that the system of government sale had put the open bar out of existence and reduced drunkenness, but had also resulted in widespread graft and political corruption. This they blamed on conditions peculiar to South Carolina, and concluded that "... the State Dispensary System, as it existed in law, can with certain very needful modifications, if taken entirely out of politics and kept clear from graft, be applied to the Province of Saskatchewan."

The report recommended that the dispensaries be placed under the control of a single individual and handle only the smallest possible number of brands; that severe penalties be provided for graft of any kind; that the hours of sale in the government stores be restricted to the period between 9 a.m. and

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[149] *Journals*, 1915, pp. 9-10; *Leader*, 12-13 May 1915.

5 p.m.; that no person be allowed to purchase more than five gallons of beer or wine, and one gallon of other liquor at a time; that careful regulations be drafted to control the sale of liquor by druggists and doctors for medicinal purposes and that the keeping of liquor in public places and clubs be prohibited.[150]

These recommendations were incorporated in the Sales of Liquor Act, which Premier Scott presented to the House on 28 May 1915. The province was divided into sixty-seven dispensary districts, the majority of which would be entitled to one liquor store; cities might have as many as three. Stores were to be established in any city or town where a wholesale licence currently existed, but these could be closed by a majority vote at the time of any municipal elections. Similarly, in districts without a liquor store, the municipal electors had the right to determine by majority vote whether one should be established. The bill also provided for the taking of a vote in 1916, 1917 or 1918 on the question of restoring the hotel bar, and another in 1919 to determine if the people wished to continue the system of government liquor stores.[151]

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[150] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1915, No. 5, *Report of the Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire Into and Report Upon the System of Liquor Dispensaries or Shops Which Recently Existed in South Carolina Under State Control*, pp. 85-95.

[151] *Leader*, 31 May 1915. In the bill which Premier Scott presented to the House there was no requirement that 25 per cent of the eligible voters of the province would have to petition the government to hold a referendum on the question of abolishing the dispensaries in 1919. Another change, suggested by the Banish-the-Bar Committee at a meeting with the Premier, permitted the municipal electors to vote out a government liquor store in the same way as

A companion measure, the Hotel Act, was placed before the members three days later. This bill, which the government considered an essential part of its new temperance policy, was intended to assist municipalities in providing decent accommodation for the travelling public after the hotel bars went out of existence.[152]

The liquor interests meanwhile had been quietly pressing the government to modify its proposed temperance legislation. The Western Canada Brewers' Association wrote to the Premier urging that hotels be permitted to sell beverages containing less than 4 per cent alcohol, and the Saskatchewan Wholesale Liquor Dealers' Association asked that their business be left undisturbed.[153] On 18 May the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Wine Merchants' Association met with the cabinet and requested that some form of compensation be provided to the wholesale liquor men and their creditors. Premier Scott replied that his government was not even prepared to discuss the question of compensation to licence holders, but did indicate that he might be prepared to consider the claims of merchants who had provided supplies to hotels.[154]

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they might vote to open one. (*Ibid.*, 2 April 1915.)

[152] *Ibid.*, 1 June 1915.

[153] Pinno, pp. 83-84.

[154] *Leader*, 19 May 1915. The Premier was well aware of the plight of these merchants, for several had written to protest the "no compensation" feature of the Oxbow policy. As one Shaunavon hardware merchant explained to Scott, "on hotels recently built here and in the vicinity we supplied material and equipment to the

A delegation from the Licensed Victuallers' Association waited on the cabinet at the beginning of June, and asked that the government submit its temperance proposals to a vote of the people before passing any legislation. The hotelmen supported their request with a petition signed by 53,000 residents of the province. The Premier simply reiterated his government's determination to carry out the policy which he had outlined at Oxbow, and added that he had received reports of irregularities in the gathering of the signatures which greatly lessened the force of the petition. He was more than ever convinced that the great majority of the people wanted his government to bring its temperance legislation into effect as soon as possible.[155]

Having received no satisfaction from Premier Scott, the executive of the Licensed Victuallers' Association advised all hotelkeepers in the province to close their hotels on 1 July. The hotelmen took the view that the proposed liquor legislation was so stringent that they would be constantly in danger of violating the

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value of several thousand dollars and we stand to lose every cent of that amount." (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Fennell Brothers Pioneer Hardware Store to Scott, 4 May 1915, pp. 48621-22.) In the end, though, the cabinet decided not to provide any form of compensation to such creditors. (*Leader*, 4 June 1915.)

[155] *Leader*, 2 June 1915. According to Scott, many had apparently signed the petition without understanding its purpose, and some had signed simply to get rid of the canvassers. Others had complained to the Premier that the petition had been misrepresented to them.

law if they kept their premises open.[156] Next day, in moving second reading of the Sales of Liquor Act in the Legislature, Scott warned the Licensed Victuallers' Association that if they made good their threat it would cause "such a revulsion of feeling amongst thinking people that nobody will even dare to suggest that the bar-room business be revived."[157]

The debate on second reading of the Sales of Liquor Act was heated and prolonged. Premier Scott was careful to remind the House, and the many representatives of the Banish-the-Bar Committee who were sitting in the public galleries, that his policy would eliminate all private interests in the liquor traffic, so that when the question of restoring the bars was put to a vote after the war there would be no organized liquor trade to influence the result. On the other hand, Scott declared, under the policy which the Leader of the Opposition had announced during the Shellbrook by-election, "there would be a strong liquor interest fighting for the retention of the licensed bar."[158]

W. B. Willoughby was the next to speak. He departed from his earlier policy by announcing that the Conservatives would accept the closing of the bars as a temporary measure until the end of the war. During this time he would leave the wholesale liquor trade in private hands, but he would still hold a referendum on total prohibition at the first municipal election after the next provincial contest. The Conservative leader argued that the temperance people had never asked the government for anything but a referendum, and offered this explanation of the Premier's motives in introducing the bill then before the House:

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[156] *Ibid.*, 3 June 1915. There were 405 licensed hotels in the province at the time, and the hotelmen claimed that about 5,000 men and women would be put out of work when the hotels closed.

[157] Spence, pp. 441.

[158] *Leader*, 4 June 1915.

> By this measure the honourable gentleman hopes to gain the support of the temperance party by reason of banishing the bar, and retain at the same time the support of the foreign element, from whom he gets the majority of his support, by providing government stores.[159]

Willoughby and J. E. Bradshaw declared that the government had no right to take the people of Saskatchewan into partnership in the liquor business, and challenged the Liberals to go to the country with their policy.[160]

Government speakers retorted that Willoughby's temperance policy played into the hands of the liquor interests, and that on every point the Leader of the Opposition and the liquor men were in agreement.[161] The Conservatives' quest for an acceptable temperance policy continued, and on 8 June F. C. Tate moved an amendment to the

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[159] *Ibid.*, 5 June 1915.

[160] *Ibid.*, 5 June 1915, 7-8 June 1915.

[161] *Ibid.*, 9 June 1915.

Sales of Liquor Act which approved of the closing of all bars, and wholesale stores as well, during the war and called for a referendum on total prohibition on or before the date of the 1915 municipal elections. The Speaker declared this amendment out of order, since its seconder, J. E. Bradshaw, had already spoken on the question, and the bill received second reading next day on a straight party vote.[162] In committee stage a number of amendments were made to the Sales of Liquor Act, which had the effect of making its provisions more restrictive,[163] and the bill passed into law on 24 June after the Liberals rejected a Conservative motion that no stores be established except by majority vote of the residents of each dispensary district.[164]

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[162] *Journals*, 1915, pp. 53-54, 58-59; *Leader*, 9-10 June 1915.

[163] In the draft bill, for example, veterinarians were to be allowed to sell liquor for medicinal purposes, but this provision was struck out. The maximum quantity of liquor which might be purchased at a government store in any one day was reduced from five gallons of beer or wine and one gallon of other spirits to four gallons of beer, two gallons of wine, and one gallon of other spirits. Another amendment provided that no liquor could be kept or consumed in any hotel or place of accommodation licensed under the Hotel Act. (*Leader*, 12 June 1915, 17 June 1915, 23 June 1915.)

[164] *Journals*, 1915, pp. 115-17; *Leader*, 25 June 1915; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Geo. V (1915), Chapter 39. The Premier was highly amused by the efforts of the Conservatives to find an acceptable temperance policy. He could hardly conceal his delight when he wrote to a friend after the session had ended that "the Opposition has made a greater mess of themselves on this question than on any previous question which is saying a good deal .... before we got through the session they had propounded five or six different policies each one putting them farther into the hole than its predecessor." (AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. B. Cochran, 1 July 1915, p. 48561.)

The Hotel Act met little opposition in the Legislature. It was generally recognized throughout the province that the provision of good accommodation would be an important consideration for the public, and particularly for travellers, once the hotels were deprived of the revenue from the bar.[165] The Premier and his colleagues realized that the success of their temperance legislation would depend to a large extent on this very factor. As J. A. Calder put it:

> Unless something is done in providing proper accommodation for the public the action of the Government in banishing the bars may have serious consequences. There are some who think that unless this problem is solved that there will be a revulsion of feeling, and that there will be a movement to get the bar back in order that hotel accommodation may be provided.[166]

The Hotel Act authorized municipal councils to licence and supervise hotels, boarding houses and restaurants, and to rent, lease or purchase buildings for the purpose of providing suitable lodging for the travelling public. A portion of the profits from the government liquor stores was to be used to assist hotel owners in the smaller communities through the period of readjustment which would follow the closing of the bars.[167]

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[165] AS, Walter Scott Papers, E. Dransfield to Scott, 24 March 1915, pp. 48493-95; United Commercial Travellers, Saskatoon Council No. 445 to Scott, 28 April 1915, p. 48608.

[166] *Leader*, 11 June 1915.

[167] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Geo. V (1915), Chapter 40. Both the Banish-the-Bar Committee and the leader of the Conservative party had suggested that legislation be drafted along these lines. (*Leader*, 2 April 1915; *Evening Province*, 28 April 1915.)

The new legislation came into effect on 1 July, and 406 hotel bars, 38 wholesale stores and 11 clubs were replaced by 23 government dispensaries.[168] The "ticklish and difficult" liquor question was settled, for a time at least, as Saskatchewan embarked on a system of government sale which Premier Scott believed to be unique within the British Empire.[169]

Almost at once there was a dramatic improvement in economic and social conditions in the province. Drunkenness was reduced. According to Regina city police statistics, the number of arrests for drunkenness in that city declined in direct proportion to the increased restrictions in obtaining liquor. In the first three months of 1915, before any action was taken by the government, the police made more arrests than in the corresponding period of 1914. With the enforced closing of the bars in the evenings beginning on 1 April, the number of arrests dropped by 100 per cent, and after the bars were closed entirely on 1 July there was a further decrease of more than 300 per cent.[170] What was true of Regina was true of

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[168] Pinno, p. 96.

[169] AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to L. B. Cochran, 1 July 1915, p. 48561; Scott to I. V. Goodall, 13 July 1915, p. 48910.

[170] *Arrests for Drunkenness in Regina, 1914-1915.*

	1914	*1915*
January - March	58	67
April - June	98	47
July - September	220	52

(Source: *Leader*, 9 October 1915.)

other communities as well. Superintendent C. H. West of the Battleford division of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police reported a very marked change in the different towns under his jurisdiction:

> People come in from the country, and as soon as they transact their business, leave for home; there are practically no loafers; there is an absence of drunkenness, and it is reported that in municipalities generally, 95 per cent more taxes have been paid.[171]

The Minister of Agriculture noted with pride that "the 27,000 necessary harvest hands this season came, helped in garnering the crop, and departed quietly with their earnings in their pockets, as contrasted with the frequent carousals and stranded stragglers of former years."[172] There was a marked decrease in crimes of all kinds, and magistrates attributed this to the disappearance of the hotel bar.[173] Some hotel proprietors did make good their threat to close their premises, and others undoubtedly found it difficult to make ends meet, but the North-West Commercial Travellers' Association, the International Harvester Company and other organizations were generally satisfied with the standard of hotel accommodation available in the province after 1 July 1915.[174]

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[171] Canada, *Sessional Papers*, Session 1916, No. 28, *Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police, 1915*, p. 155.

[172] AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to the editor, *Canadian Countryman*, 20 November 1915, p. 12008.

[173] *Leader*, 2 December 1915.

[174] Pinno, pp. 103-106. When approached individually it was clear that many hotelmen were not prepared to heed the advice of the

At the time of the municipal elections in December 1915 three districts voted to close the dispensaries, and four others voted against the opening of a government store.[175] Heartened by this decisive verdict, and by the rising tide of prohibition sentiment across the country, the Committee of One Hundred appealed to the government to abolish the remaining liquor stores.[176] There were many temperance supporters in the province who believed that the recent vote had been so strongly opposed to the dispensaries that there was no need to further test public opinion, but Premier Scott did not agree. "No, the more I examine the question," he wrote to a Moose Jaw clergyman, "the more I incline to think that an immediate plebiscite is the best solution."[177] The Sales of Liquor Act was accordingly amended to provide for the taking of a vote on the future of the government liquor store system in 1916, rather than in

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Licensed Victuallers' Association. A canvass of Regina hotels by the *Leader* indicated that only one hotel in that city would close on 30 June 1915 when the bars were abolished. (*Leader*, 29 June 1915.)

[175] *Leader*, 14 December 1915.

[176] *Ibid.*, 20 January 1916. In July 1915, with the Saskatchewan dispensaries scarcely in operation, Alberta voted solidly for prohibition in a referendum, and three months later Premier Norris announced that a prohibition referendum would be held in Manitoba in March 1916. (Spence, pp. 425, 457.)

[177] Pinno, p. 111; AS, Walter Scott Papers, Scott to Rev. M. M. Bennett, 15 February 1916, p. 49048.

1919 as originally intended.[178]

The 1916 referendum campaign was a one-sided affair. The English-language press in Saskatchewan was practically a unit in opposition to the dispensaries. The Conservatives, of course, had never favoured the system of government sale, and now even the Liberals called for its abolition.[179] The closing of the bars and wholesale stores in July 1915 had virtually eliminated the liquor interests from the province, and what little opposition there was to the eradication of the government stores came from some of the foreign-born residents and their newspapers.

Der Courier, for example, expressed the hope that the dispensary system would be maintained, and the German-Canadian Provincial Alliance urged that the people be given an opportunity to vote on the sale of beer and wine in the coming referendum.[180] On the other hand, *Norrana*, a Norwegian weekly, carried on an active campaign "to get the liquor out of Saskatchewan." It predicted that 90 per cent of the Norwegians would vote to close the dispensaries. The *Canadian Farmer*, a Ukrainian newspaper published in Winnipeg, urged its Saskatchewan readers to "get organized and vote against the Stores," and Ukrainian clergymen in the Yorkton district made a similar plea from the pulpits.[181]

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[178] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Geo. V (1916), Chapter 35, sec. 15.

[179] Pinno, pp. 112-14.

[180] *Ibid.*, pp. 114-15.

The granting of the provincial franchise to women early in 1916 sealed the fate of the dispensary system. Saskatchewan women had won the right to vote almost without a struggle. Both parties had expressed approval of the principle of women's suffrage from the time it was first raised in the Legislature by J. E. Bradshaw in 1912, but Premier Scott and his colleagues took the position that the government would not be justified in extending the franchise to women until they had first demonstrated that they wanted it.[182] The women's suffrage movement in Saskatchewan was first and foremost a movement of farm and small town women, and it was they who organized a campaign to persuade men and women across the province to sign petitions and write letters to the Premier demanding this reform.[183]

The suffragists found a powerful ally in the temperance movement. The Banish-the-Bar Committee demanded in January 1914 that women be permitted to vote on the same terms as men in any plebiscite on the question of closing the bars.[184] The provincial W.C.T.U.

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[181] *Ibid.*, pp. 17, 115-16.

[182] *Leader*, 17 December 1912, 10 December 1913.

[183] C. MacDonald, "How Saskatchewan Women Got the Vote," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. I No. 3 (Autumn, 1948), pp. 1-4; J. Menzies, "Votes for Saskatchewan's Women," *Politics in Saskatchewan*, pp. 81-85.

[184] *Leader*, 14 January 1914.

went a step further and launched an aggressive campaign to secure full voting rights for Saskatchewan women.[185] To co-ordinate their activities the W.G.G.A., W.C.T.U. and other groups interested in women's suffrage established a central organization, the Provincial Equal Franchise Board of Saskatchewan, early in 1915.[186]

Representatives from the Equal Franchise Board, the Saskatchewan Trades and Labour Congress and the S.G.G.A. met with Premier Scott in May and asked that the government grant the vote to women. They presented a petition containing more than 10,000 signatures in support of their request, but the Premier refused to give a definite reply until he had consulted with his cabinet colleagues.[187] The 1915 session ended without any action having been taken to extend the provincial franchise to women, though the Legislature did amend the City and Town Acts to permit married women property owners to vote in municipal elections. The Legislature also passed another bill of great importance to women, the Homestead Act, which prevented a husband from mortgaging or selling their homestead without the written consent of his wife.[188]

The work of gathering signatures continued, and on 14

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[185] MacDonald, "How Saskatchewan Women," p. 4.

[186] *Leader*, 15 February 1915.

[187] *Ibid.*, 28 May 1915.

[188] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Geo. V (1915), Chapter 16-17, 29.

February 1916 another large and determined delegation descended upon the Legislative Buildings with a much more impressive petition in favour of women's suffrage. This time the Premier announced that his government would meet their wishes.[189] The necessary amendment to the Election Act was quickly approved by the Legislature, and on 14 March Saskatchewan became the second province in the Dominion to extend the vote to women.[190]

Few prohibitionists doubted that the newly-enfranchised women would vote solidly against the government liquor stores, and the Committee of One Hundred made a special appeal to the W.C.T.U., the W.G.G.A., Homemakers' Clubs and other women's organizations to make certain that women went to the polls.[191] The women took up the challenge and when the opportunity arrived they helped to roll up a great majority for prohibition.

In the referendum held on 11 December 1916 on the question "Shall the Liquor Stores System be abolished?" 95,249 men and women voted in the affirmative and 23,666 in the negative. It was the urban centres, and particularly the towns, rather than the country districts, which polled the largest majorities in favour of prohibition. In the cities the vote was seven to one against continuing the dispensaries, and in the towns nine to one, while in the rural areas it was only three to one. As might have been expected, anti-prohibition sentiment was strongest in the foreign-born settlements. The area north and east of Saskatoon, where there was a large German and Austrian population, cast the largest vote in favour of retaining the government liquor stores. In Regina, which had a large German population, prohibition carried by a margin of less than five to one, but in Saskatoon, with only a third as many German residents, the vote was over ten to one in favour of closing the stores.[192]

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[189] *Leader*, 15 February 1916.

[190] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Geo. V (1916), Chapter 37, sec. 1-2.

[191] Pinno, p. 120.

There can be little doubt that the war hastened the demise of the liquor traffic in Saskatchewan. Sentiment in favour of "temperance" was heightened by the wartime atmosphere of sacrifice and self-denial. What the Scott government had been unwilling to do in December 1913 -- introduce legislation closing all bars in the province -- it had been forced by an aroused public opinion to do within a year after the war began. Even this had not satisfied the rising demand for the complete eradication of the liquor traffic, and with women voting for only the second time in Canada, Saskatchewan had recorded an impressive majority for provincial prohibition. The government was quick to act once the wishes of the people had been made known. On the day following the referendum vote, Attorney-General Turgeon announced that the government would close the remaining liquor stores at the end of the year.[193] Prohibitionists could rejoice that their long campaign to end the sale of liquor within the province had come to a successful conclusion. Saskatchewan had entered a new and, to their way of thinking, a better era. It remained only for the government to enforce the expressed wishes of the people and that "war to the death between the Church and the saloon" which had occupied the attention of reformers in Saskatchewan for nearly a decade would be over. In fact, of course, the millennium was not to be reached so easily. Governments in Saskatchewan were to find that prohibition legislation was no stronger than the public opinion which supported it, that it was one thing to ban the sale of liquor and quite another to enforce a law which many thought an infringement of personal liberty.

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[192] *Saskatchewan Gazette*, Vol. XIII No. 3, 15 February 1917, pp. 27-38; Pinno, pp. 121-23.

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[193] *Leader*, 12 December 1916.

CHAPTER V

SCHOOLS, SCANDALS AND THE 1917 PROVINCIAL ELECTION

The same wartime emotions that had given such an impetus to the "banish-the-bar" crusade also intensified racial and religious animosities in Saskatchewan. What had begun as an attack against separate schools in 1913 and 1914 was transformed by the wartime suspicion of the "foreigner" into an all-out assault against the use of German, Ruthenian and even French in Saskatchewan classrooms. By 1915 a small but vocal segment of the province's Anglo-Protestant population were calling upon the Scott government to make English the only language of instruction in the schools. The Liberals, who owed much of their success in provincial politics to the unwavering support of foreign-born voters, found themselves in a difficult position, one that was further complicated by the sensational charges of bribery and corruption levelled against the government during the 1916 session of the Legislature. Walter Scott was compelled by ill health to resign in the midst of the crisis, leaving to his successor, W. M. Martin, the task of restoring public confidence in the government and the party which had ruled the province since 1905. With a cloud of scandal hanging over the Legislative Buildings in Regina, the Conservatives pledging that they would end the teaching of "foreign" languages in the schools at the first opportunity, and Saskatchewan farmers showing a new impatience with both of the national parties, his task was not to be an easy one.

The influx of large numbers of settlers whose language, religion and culture were so very different from those of the dominant Anglo-Protestant majority had been viewed with some misgivings even before 1914,[1] but most Saskatchewan residents confidently assumed that these newcomers would be assimilated and would contribute to the growth and development of the country. As one newspaper put it in 1908:

> We concede that where considerable communities are made up of peasants from the same part of Continental Europe the process of assimilation may be slower than where the alien races form a small minority of the population, but the genius of British institutions will, we feel confident, be equal to the building up in Canada of a nation whose people will have a diverse origin, but will preserve the best features of the several races from which they have sprung.[2]

The fact that immigrants from central and eastern Europe were readily welcomed to the province before 1914 was due as much to economic necessity as to a spirit of tolerance and "British fair play." Wheat was wheat, after all, whether it was grown by a Yorkshireman or a Galician, and the whole province stood to benefit if its vacant lands were cleared and made productive.

In August 1914 Premier Scott appealed for tolerance and a united effort to win the war,[3] and for a time the people of the province heeded his call. Bishop Nicetas Budka, spiritual leader of the Greek Catholics in western Canada, caused something of a stir in the Yorkton district in the early days of the war. On 3 August he issued a pastoral letter calling on all loyal subjects of Austria-Hungary to defend their homeland in its hour of peril. Two days later, after Great Britain had entered the war, he issued a second appeal to his flock expressing his full sympathy for the British cause, but it was some time before the outcry over the first pastoral letter died down.[4] In Regina one overzealous citizen attempted to set fire to the house of a man employed by the local German newspaper, *Der Courier*.[5] Others in the city complained to the federal authorities that the paper was publishing anti-British editorials. An investigation was conducted but no charges were laid.[6] These were isolated incidents, and the Commissioner of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police was able to report in 1916 that the first year of the war had been "singularly quiet and orderly" in Saskatchewan.[7] Residents of the province of German or Austro-Hungarian extraction, who constituted nearly one quarter of the

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[1] See, for example, *Leader*, 28 October 1907, 19 December 1913.

[2] *Vidette* (Indian Head), 18 June 1908.

[3] *C.A.R.*, 1914, p. 631.

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[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 278-79; *Evening Province*, 7 August 1914; *Leader*, 8 August 1914.

[5] *Leader*, 8 August 1914.

[6] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, A. B. Perry, Commissioner, R.N.W.M.P., to the Comptroller, R.N.W.M.P., 31 August 1914, pp. 105963-66; memorandum from the Comptroller, R.N.W.M.P., 4 September 1914, p. 105993.

[7] *Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police*, 1915, p. 8.

Saskatchewan population when the war broke out,[8] were by and large left alone to pursue their occupations as best they could. The decline in construction activity put immigrant labourers in the cities out of work, and some companies, such as the Canadian Northern Railway, apparently discharged all German and Austrian employees in the early days of the war.[9] On the other hand, the daily lives of immigrant farmers were little disturbed by the war. Indeed they prospered because of the Allies' need for wheat and other foodstuffs.

Suspicion of the "foreigner" intensified as the struggle with Germany and Austria-Hungary entered its second year, and the question of making English the only language of instruction in Saskatchewan schools became a burning political issue. The spark was provided by an amendment to the School Act which Premier Scott brought before the Legislature in May 1915. Since Territorial days the law had required that all schools be taught in the English language, though French could also be used as a language of instruction in the "primary course."[10] In 1901 the school ordinance had been changed to permit instruction "in any language other than English" during the last hour of the school day as well. One or more "competent persons" could be employed to provide such instruction, and the regulation stipulated that the cost of employing a "competent person" who was not the teacher normally in charge of the school would be borne by a special levy on the parents of the pupils.[11] These provisions were carried over into the new province of Saskatchewan after 1905,[12] and they were still in effect ten years later when the following amendment was introduced as part of the Consolidated School Act:

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[8] In 1911 there were 68,628 Germans in Saskatchewan and 41,651 of Austro-Hungarian extraction, out of a total population of 492,432. (*Fifth Census of Canada, 1911*, Vol. II, p. 340.)

[9] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, German-Canadian Provincial Alliance of Saskatchewan to Borden, 21 September 1914, pp. 106108-12.

[10] North-West Territories, *Ordinances*,1892, No. 22, sec. 83. Although the term "primary course" was not to be given a precise definition until 1918, the Department of Education considered grades one and two as a "reasonable interpretation" in 1915. (AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, A. Ball to J. Gagnon, 8 February 1915.)

> Provided that if the regular teacher is competent to conduct such course of instruction the board should not be required to impose and collect such special rate.[13]

In itself the amendment was innocuous, since qualified foreign-speaking teachers had always been in short supply,[14] but the Conservative newspaper in Regina was quick to discern a sinister plot. In a front page editorial entitled "A Wedge for Bi-lingualism," the *Evening Province and Standard* pointed out that the non-English majority in any school district could henceforth escape the extra cost of foreign language instruction by hiring a teacher of their own nationality who would be "competent" under the regulations.

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[11] North-West Territories, *Ordinances*, 1901, Chapter 29, sec. 136.

[12] Saskatchewan, *Revised Statutes*, 1909, Chapter 100, sec. 135.

[13] *Evening Province*, 26 May 1915.

[14] *Leader*, 7 December 1911.

Pupils would then no longer be exposed to English-speaking teachers. Claiming that the Scott government was deliberately bidding for the support of foreign-born voters, the editor warned:

> This amendment in operation makes all the difference between a one-language school system and bi-lingualism, tri-lingualism or multi-lingualism in our public school system. Those people who believe in a public school system using only the English language must fight it to the death.
>
> It is a deliberate and dastardly attack upon the public school system, subtly and cunningly concealed, but as dangerous as open recognition of the German, Austrian, Galician or French languages as of equal status with English in our public school system.[15]

In the Legislature W. B. Willoughby and his Opposition colleagues took the same tack. The Conservative leader declared that the public schools should not become a medium for teaching foreign languages and asked that the offending clause be withdrawn because it introduced bilingualism into the schools. Premier Scott replied that it was ridiculous for anyone to suspect or link the government to a policy of bilingualism. Rather than have such suspicions spread, he moved that the clause be withdrawn. The Legislature unanimously concurred, and the *Evening Province* was quick to boast that it had been instrumental in eliminating bilingualism from the public school system, which it eulogized as "the melting pot from which the second generation may emerge Canadian to the core."[16]

The alacrity with which the Conservatives rose to the defence of the public school should not have been surprising. Ever since 1905 the party of Haultain and Willoughby had posed as the special champions of public nonsectarian education in Saskatchewan, and it would have been even more remarkable had the Opposition remained silent. Still, there is reason to suspect that more than principle was involved in 1915. The introduction of this amendment may have seemed to Willoughby a golden opportunity to discredit the Scott government, whose success at the polls had been due in no small measure to the overwhelming support of the "foreign" voter, and at the same time consolidate Conservative support among English-speaking Protestants. Certainly the Conservatives had nothing to lose by taking a hard line, for their party's stand on the "school question" had never endeared it to those voters who were neither English-speaking nor Protestant. In 1905 Haultain's use of the famous "pastoral letter" had nearly won him the election; a second time such tactics might well propel the Conservatives into office.

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[15] *Evening Province*, 26 May 1915.

[16] *Ibid.*, 3 June 1915.

The signs that a campaign directed against Roman Catholics and "foreigners" would meet with a favourable public response grew more promising with each passing month. Before the end of the year, the long-simmering controversy between Premier Scott and Rev. Murdoch MacKinnon over the School Act amendment of 1913 again burst into public prominence. On 26 December 1915 the pastor of Knox Presbyterian Church delivered another scathing attack against the government to a packed congregation which included the Premier himself. In a sermon which lasted nearly two hours MacKinnon charged that the clerical school, which had been "blasted" out of

Europe, had now taken root in Saskatchewan as a result of the 1913 amendment, and that it was perpetuating "non-Anglo-Saxon ideals" in the province. Instead of fostering assimilation, which was its duty, the government had used the power of the Legislature to assist the French, Poles, Germans and Ruthenians in undermining that "great unifying agency," the public school.[17] At the end of the year Scott and MacKinnon carried their feud into the columns of Regina's newspapers with the publication of the first of a series of open letters. Their polemic continued for weeks, as Reginans were treated to the spectacle of a Premier and his pastor hurling charges of "manufacturing evidence" and "falsifying facts" back and forth across the pages of the *Leader* and the *Evening Province*.[18] Then on 23 January MacKinnon preached his third and final sermon on the separate school issue and again castigated the government in the strongest possible language.[19]

The Conservatives, meanwhile, were meeting in convention in Saskatoon. In a wide-ranging address Willoughby told the delegates that "the outlook for the return to power of the Conservative party was never as good as at the present time" and outlined the platform on which it would fight the next election: government ownership and operation of all rural and urban telephone lines in the province, restoration of the government-operated hail insurance scheme which the Liberals had abandoned in 1908, and abolition of the Board of Highway Commissioners and its army of "... party hacks doing nothing but party work at the expense of the people of the province." His announcement that the Conservatives would also repeal the School Act amendment of 1913 when they formed the next government was warmly received, but when he then went on to refer to Premier Scott's "attempt" to open the way for bilingualism, and declared that English should be the only language of instruction in public schools, "... the two hundred delegates cheered themselves hoarse."[20]

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[17] *Ibid.*, 27 December 1915.

[18] *Leader*, 27 December 1915, 30 December 1915, 1 January 1916, 8 January 1916, 13-15 January 1916, 21-22 January 1916.

[19] *Evening Province*, 24 January 1916.

The Orange Lodge also had an eye on the next election. Officials of the Order met with Premier Scott and members of his cabinet a few days after the M.L.A.'s had assembled in Regina to begin the 1916 session, and informed the government that Orangemen would support the political party which favoured the abolition of separate schools. The delegation also conveyed the Order's opinion that the teaching of French should not enjoy any special status and that foreign languages should not be taught at all in the primary grades. Hints that the Orangemen had succeeded in turning governments out of office in other provinces because they had tampered with the public schools had no apparent effect; the Lodge executive received a respectful hearing, but nothing more.[21]

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[20] *Ibid.*, 20 January 1916.

[21] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, series G (6), "Grand Orange Lodge of Saskatchewan, Report of Proceedings when delegation waited upon Government, 11 A M, Thursday, 20 Jan. 1916."

The third wartime session of the Saskatchewan Legislature was to be the stormiest in the eleven year history of the province. It began quietly enough, though, with Richard Stuart Lake, the former Conservative M.P. for Qu'Appelle who had recently been appointed Saskatchewan's third Lieutenant-Governor, reading the Speech from the Throne on 18 January 1916. Union Jacks were draped over the desks normally occupied by Joseph Glenn and J. P. Lyle, both of whom were on active service overseas, and another M.L.A., Macbeth Malcolm, appeared in khaki.[22] The first sensation was provided by the Premier himself, when he referred during the Throne Speech debate to rumours of scandal involving his government. For some months past Conservative politicians and Conservative newspapers had been hinting darkly that there was, as the *Evening Province* put it, "... need of a house cleaning in a certain Augean stable."[23] Most of these rumours had been vague and indefinite, but some had been more specific. It was claimed, for example, that certain unnamed Liberal M.L.A.'s had received bribes from the liquor interests to oppose the banish-the-bar bill which the Scott government had introduced and then hurriedly withdrawn in December 1913. Wholesale graft in the construction of the asylum for the insane at North Battleford was alleged to have inflated its cost by more than 300 per cent. There were suggestions too of serious irregularities in the expenditure of money for road work in the dried-out districts of southwestern Saskatchewan in 1914.[24]

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[22] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 9-12; *Leader*, 19 January 1916.

[23] *Evening Province*, 16 June 1915.

The time had come, the Premier told the House on 19 January, to put a stop to these rumours. "If an accusation of a serious character is made by a responsible member here against any one of my colleagues or against myself, I wish it to be at all times clearly and unequivocally understood that ample opportunity, and the most immediate possible opportunity, will be provided for complete and thorough investigation of the charges." There would be no necessity for the Opposition to go direct to the Lieutenant-Governor to demand a royal commission, as had happened during the recent "Parliament Building Scandal" in Manitoba, for the government would not refuse to act if specific charges were made.[25] There was no immediate response from W. B. Willoughby or the other Conservatives, and a few days later Premier Scott left the province to attend a convention of immigration agents in Chicago.[26]

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[24] *Ibid.*, 16 June 1915, 12 October 1915.

[25] *Leader*, 20 January 1916. During the 1915 session of the Manitoba Legislature the Liberals had demanded a thorough investigation of the construction of the new Legislative Buildings. The Conservative-dominated Legislature did conduct an inquiry, through its public accounts committee, but found nothing wrong. This had not deterred the Opposition, and one of their number, A. B. Hudson, then proceeded to make specific charges of negligence and graft and demanded a royal commission to conduct a more thorough investigation. When the Roblin government stood firm, and refused to appoint a commission, the Liberals had approached the Lieutenant-Governor with the same request. The Lieutenant-Governor had given Roblin the choice of recommending the appointment of a royal commission or of being requested to tender his resignation as Premier, and the government had agreed on 1 April 1915 to appoint the commission which the Liberals had demanded. By 7 May enough had been revealed in the inquiry to substantiate the Liberal charges, and on 12 May the Roblin government had resigned from office in disgrace. The scandal that engulfed the Roblin government in 1915, and its aftermath, are discussed in greater detail in W. L. Morton, *Manitoba*, pp. 341-46.

During the early weeks of the session the Opposition seemed content merely to probe. On 24 January W. B. Willoughby asked that the government table all correspondence relating to the purchase of the site and subsequent construction of the insane asylum.[27] Next day D. J. Wylie demanded a detailed return of all moneys expended by the Board of Highway Commissioners in southwestern Saskatchewan since 1914, together with all pertinent documents. J. A. Calder, who was leading the government in Premier Scott's absence, objected to the work that would be required, claiming that some 40,000 documents would have to be prepared to satisfy the member for Maple Creek. When pressed to justify his request Wylie would say only that he believed the information to be "in the public interest." To this Willoughby added that he had heard rumours that certain hotel keepers had connived with the road foremen to have the road gangs paid in the barrooms of their hotels. The Conservative motion was defeated on the first division of the session, though in modified form Wylie's request was granted. A return showing the total amount expended on road work in the southwest and the number of men engaged in the work was tabled in the House some days later.[28] Still another

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[26] *Evening Province*, 24-25 January 1916.

[27] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 24-25.

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27, 56-57; *Leader*, 26 January 1916.

Conservative moved for a return showing the cost of the recently completed Twenty-Fifth Street traffic bridge in Saskatoon.[29] On 2 February, at the request of the Opposition, the public accounts committee began a detailed examination of the purchase of the land for a telephone building in Swift Current,[30] and the Legislature busied itself with a lengthy debate on the need to bring the long-delayed agricultural credit scheme into operation. The government simply marked time, waiting until the Premier's return before introducing any important bills.[31]

Then on the evening of 10 February came the first of the sensational changes that would keep the Legislature in a state of almost constant turmoil for the next month. J. E. Bradshaw rose in his place in the Legislature to introduce a resolution accusing the government of wholesale graft and corruption. Specifically, he charged that a number of Liberal M.L.A.'s had been bribed in December 1913 to oppose the government's banish-the-bar bill; that hotel owners had given money to individual M.L.A.'s in order to secure liquor licences, and had also contributed to a Liberal campaign fund; that prosecutions against licensees had been stifled by the government in consideration of political support; that friends of the government had received advance notice of Premier Scott's Oxbow speech and had thus been able to dispose of hotel property to their advantage and that more than $50,000 had been paid out by the government on various pretended contracts for road work between 1913 and 1915 without any of the work having been done. Bradshaw's resolution demanded that the government appoint a royal commission of judges to investigate his charges and report their findings to the Legislature.[32]

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[29] *Journals*, 1916, p. 32.

[30] *Leader*, 3 February 1916, 8-9 February 1916.

[31] *Evening Province*, 29 January 1916; *Leader*, 2-3 February 1916, 10 February 1916.

The Liberals were taken by surprise, for Bradshaw had not given the customary two days' notice of his intention to introduce a resolution before the House.[33] W. F. A. Turgeon was on his feet at once for the government, denouncing the sensational manner in which the charges had been presented. He criticized Bradshaw for not giving names and details, thereby leaving every Liberal member in the House under a cloud of suspicion. When the debate resumed next afternoon, the Attorney-General assured the Legislature that every proper means would be taken to investigate these matters, but by a select committee rather than by a royal commission.[34]

This procedure was dismissed out of hand by the Leader of the Opposition, who insisted that his colleague be given every opportunity to prove his accusations. An Opposition of five could not undertake the task of placing these matters before a select committee of the Legislature. Willoughby pressed the government to appoint a royal commission, claiming that this alone would satisfy the public. The acting Premier then challenged the Conservatives to make "definite and proper" charges, and warned that "... we will stay here all year if necessary to get at the bottom of these matters." Repeated questioning by the Liberals failed to elicit from Bradshaw the names of any of the members who had received bribes, or were otherwise implicated by his charges. The Speaker, J. A. Sheppard, demanded that Bradshaw name the guilty members or withdraw his resolution. When the member for Prince Albert continued to refuse to give details, Turgeon appealed to the Speaker to declare the motion out of order, and he so ruled. The Conservatives challenged Sheppard's ruling, but it was upheld on a straight party vote.[35]

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[32] *Journals*, 1916, p. 69.

[33] *Leader*, 11 February 1916.

[34] *Ibid.*, 11-12 February 1916.

In the days that followed the Conservatives continued to press for a full inquiry by royal commission, the Liberals continued to insist that the only proper way to investigate Bradshaw's charges was by means of a select committee. On 14 February the Legislature declared Bradshaw's accusation that M.L.A.'s had accepted bribes a grave breach of its privileges on another straight party division, and ordered him to specify which members were guilty. This he refused to do, and he was reprimanded by order of the Legislature. Then the Attorney-General moved that the bribery charge be referred to a select committee of the House, to consist of three Liberals

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[35] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 71-73; *Leader*, 12 February 1916.

(W. C. Sutherland, S. J. Latta and B. Larson) and two Conservatives (D. J. Wylie and W. W. Davidson), and that Bradshaw be ordered to appear before it. Premier Scott, who by this time had arrived back in Regina, assured the Opposition that the government would provide them with all the legal assistance they needed and would pay all expenses. The Conservatives refused to budge. Turgeon's motion was carried over their protests, of course, but Wylie and Davidson refused to take part in any of the work of the committee, and Bradshaw likewise refused to give any evidence before it.[36]

The road fraud charges were referred to the Select Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Printing after a spirited debate on 16 February, in which the Liberals again attacked Bradshaw for the manner in which he had presented his charges to the House, and challenged him to furnish specific details. Bradshaw continued to assure the House that he had all the evidence that was necessary, and that it would be forthcoming just as soon as a royal commission was appointed. W. B. Willoughby attempted to have the road work charges referred to a royal commission of judges, but his motion was voted down by a margin of 35 to 4.[37] Two days later the Opposition was again unsuccessful in its demand for a royal commission. On a straight party vote the Legislature instead agreed to refer the remainder of the bribery and liquor charges, except those relating to alleged campaign contributions by hotel owners, to another select committee headed by R. A. Magee.[38]

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[36] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 75-79, 86; *Leader*, 15 February 1916; *Evening Province*, 16 February 1916.

[37] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 85-88; *Leader*, 17 February 1916; *Evening Province*, 17 February 1916.

While Bradshaw remained unwilling to name the M.L.A.'s who he claimed had accepted bribes in 1913, Frank Brunner, a former treasurer of the Licensed Victuallers' Association, was not so reticent. In a published affidavit he declared that H. C. Pierce, M.L.A. for Wadena, had informed him on 6 February 1916 that a private meeting of certain members of the Legislature had taken place in Regina the day before to discuss rumours that a royal commission would soon be appointed to investigate these allegations of bribery. In order to protect themselves, these unnamed M.L.A.'s had decided to have Grant Waddell, a Regina hotelman, and three others including Brunner arrested on serious charges so as to discredit any testimony they might be asked to give.[39] Pierce promptly denied that any such meeting had taken place,[40] and Brunner was summoned to testify before the Sutherland Committee on 18 February. Brunner at first refused to explain the statements he had made in the affidavit. When called before the bar of the House he again declined to answer questions on the ground that he might incriminate himself. For this he was cited for contempt by the

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[38] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 93-98; *Leader*, 19 February 1916. The other members of the select committee were J. G. Gardiner, W. G. Robinson, W. W. Davidson and D. J. Wylie.

[39] *Evening Province*, 17 February 1916.

[40] *Leader*, 17 February 1916.

Legislature and committed to the custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms.[41] Finally, on 25 February, Brunner apologized to the House and agreed to give his evidence to the select committee. He named H. C. Pierce, J. O. Nolin, C. H. Cawthorpe, S. S. Simpson, Gerhard Ens, A. F. Totzke, D. C. Lochead and the present Speaker, J. A. Sheppard, as the members who had received the bribes. He claimed too that J. A. Calder had known all about the bribery of these members before the government brought down its new liquor legislation in 1915, and had warned the hotelmen not to attempt anything of that kind again.[42]

In the meantime there had been more sensational developments in the Legislature. On 18 February J. A. Calder admitted to the House that a trusted employee of the Board of Highway Commissioners had suddenly disappeared from the city, and that the government had reason to believe that this man was "directly connected with the allegation made that sums of money had been fraudulently taken from the Public Treasury." Calder informed the members that these developments had come as a "complete surprise," and appealed to the Opposition to turn over any additional information they might have concerning the road frauds, so that any other guilty parties might be apprehended at once.[43] There was no immediate reply from J. E.

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[41] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 92-95; *Leader*, 19 February 1916.

[42] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 130-31; *Evening Province*, 25-26 February 1916.

[43] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 99-100. The missing employee was of course J. P. Brown, Chief Clerk of the Board of Highway Commissioners.

Bradshaw or the others,[44] but on 21 February the member for Prince Albert startled the House by making a new series of charges.

This time Bradshaw directly accused cabinet ministers of various corrupt practices. He contended that J. A. Calder had promised in March 1912 to make certain amendments to the Liquor Act in return for a promise of political support from the Licensed Victuallers, that W. F. A. Turgeon had borrowed the sum of $300 from a liquor licensee in 1914 and had not repaid the loan until over a year later, that a group of Swift Current hotelmen had contributed some $1500 to Premier Scott's campaign fund in 1912, and that A. P. McNab had arranged to have charges against liquor licensees withdrawn in return for political support. The ministers concerned all responded with vigorous denials and challenged Bradshaw to furnish proof. Premier Scott treated these latest charges as utterly trivial, pointing out that there was nothing inherently wrong in the first three, and that the fourth, while involving a wrongful act, lacked sufficient detail to be seriously considered by any court in the land. Nevertheless, McNab insisted that the last charge be referred to the Magee Committee, and the Legislature readily agreed to do so. The Attorney-General created great amusement among his colleagues on the government side of the House when he explained that he and the hotelman in question, a "personal acquaintance" named Frank Brunner, had put up $600 to be invested by Turgeon's brother in a certain Calgary oil stock during the great southern Alberta oil "boom" of 1914. He confessed to the House that he "had not made anything out of Calgary oil," but promised the Opposition that the government would give consideration to appointing a royal commission to investigate other speculative ventures of the Turgeon family. The government benches exploded in a roar of laughter.[45]

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[44] *Leader*, 19 February 1916; *Evening Province*, 19 February 1916.

The bribery charges, on the other hand, were no laughing matter. Later that same evening Premier Scott reported to the House that criminal prosecutions would be undertaken against any guilty members. He also intimated that the work of investigating the road frauds would be entrusted to a royal commission so that the Legislature would not be compelled to sit all spring while the public accounts committee sifted through the evidence that was being gathered. At least one Supreme Court judge would be included on the royal commission, and the Premier promised to announce the membership of the commission within a day or two. This did not satisfy the Opposition, nor, according to D. J. Wylie, would it satisfy the people of the province. At the very first opportunity the voters would show the government how they felt about its refusing to have all of Bradshaw's charges investigated by a fair and impartial tribunal.[46]

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[45] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 104-106; *Leader*, 22 February 1916.

[46] *Leader*, 22 February 1916; *Evening Province*, 22 February 1916.

Since his return to Regina Premier Scott had been in almost daily communication with the Lieutenant-Governor, informing him of developments in the Legislature and advising him of the course of action which the government proposed to take. Scott was particularly concerned that Lake might disregard the advice of his ministers and appoint the omnibus royal commission which Willoughby and Bradshaw were demanding. The Premier's fears were heightened by Conservative taunts in the House that the government would find itself forced to the people sooner than it expected, and he sought assurances from the Lieutenant-Governor that a repetition of the recent Manitoba situation would not occur in Saskatchewan.[47] In fact, W. B. Willoughby and F. C. Tate did visit Government House on the evening of 21 February. They brought with them a petition requesting Lieutenant-Governor Lake to appoint a royal commission in view of all that had transpired since 10 February, including the new charges which Bradshaw had made in the Legislature that afternoon.[48]

In his interview with the Premier next day, Lake made it clear that he considered the new charges serious enough to warrant investigation. Scott did not, though as he pointed out the charge involving A. P. McNab had already been referred to the select committee. Infuriated that the Conservatives should attempt to go over his head, Scott demanded that Lake make the petition public at once. Lake demurred, and asked for time to consider the matter further. The Lieutenant-Governor gave it as his opinion that all of the charges together had created a very great deal of suspicion in the public mind, which he believed justified the Opposition's request for a royal commission.[49]

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[47] AS, Walter Scott Papers, memorandum of conferences with the Lieutenant-Governor, 19 February 1916, 21 February 1916, pp. 48078-86.

[48] *Ibid.*, memorandum of conference with the Lieutenant-Governor, 22 February 1916, p. 48088.

Lake's own political affiliations were well known, and there may well have been some justification for the Liberals' concern that this recent appointee of the Borden government would disregard the advice of his constitutional advisors and appoint the omnibus royal commission which W. B. Willoughby and the Conservatives were demanding. It was doubtless these suspicions of a "Tory plot" which prompted the vigorous Liberal counter-attack in the Legislature that evening. Premier Scott moved a lengthy resolution providing for the appointment of a royal commission of three persons, one a judge of the Saskatchewan bench, to inquire into the road frauds. J. A. Calder then proceeded to deliver a slashing attack against what he termed "the strong arm of federal interference" in provincial affairs. He claimed that the Minister of the Interior, Robert Rogers, had on two occasions approached him to use his influence with the Manitoba Liberals to stop any further investigation into the recent scandals in that province, and had threatened to retaliate against the Scott government if he refused. According to Calder, the five Opposition M.L.A.'s sitting across the floor were but the "willing tools" in a campaign engineered from Ottawa to discredit the government of Saskatchewan. The real issue was not Walter Scott versus John Ernest Bradshaw, it was "... Walter Scott versus Bob Rogers."[50] It was the same cry that the Liberals had used to such good effect in 1912, though its credibility was diminished by Rogers' prompt denial from Ottawa that he had made any such threats.[51] Bradshaw too made light of Calder's accusations, pointing out that if in fact Robert Rogers had had anything to do with the revelations of graft and corruption in Regina, the people of the province owed him a debt of gratitude for bringing this "rotten" state of affairs to their attention.[52]

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[49] *Ibid.*, pp. 48088-94.

While the House continued to debate the government's motion to refer the road fraud charges to a royal commission, Premier Scott met again with the Lieutenant-Governor. Lake informed the Premier that he had come to the conclusion that Bradshaw's charges against the four cabinet ministers were not of a serious nature. He had therefore informed the Leader of the Opposition that his petition for a royal commission could not be granted. It was agreed that the petition would not be published, though Scott insisted that as Premier he had the right to do so at any time.[53] What might have become a very ticklish constitutional issue was thereby averted, and it was left to the government and the Legislature to decide what disposition would be made of the various matters which the Opposition had raised.

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[50] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 111-13; *Leader*, 23 February 1916.

[51] *Evening Province*, 23 February 1916; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 23 February 1916, pp. 191210-11; Laurier to W. Scott, 24 February 1916, pp. 191213-14.

[52] *Leader*, 24 February 1916.

These last few tension-filled weeks had been a trying time for Premier Scott, never a man of robust health. Coupled with his long and oftimes acrimonious feud with Rev. Murdoch MacKinnon, they had brought him to the verge of complete nervous exhaustion. The deteriorating state of Walter Scott's health was never more apparent than on 24 February, when in the course of announcing that the government would repeal the School Act amendment of 1913, he delivered another blistering attack against his old foe. The Premier explained to the House, and to the packed galleries, which included several prominent Protestant clergymen including MacKinnon, that the amendment was no longer needed. The judge whose decision in 1911 had brought the Act into question now admitted that he had not at the time been aware of two previous decisions by higher courts which had upheld the original intent of the law. Scott then went on to defend his lengthy polemic with the pastor of Knox Church, declaring that it had been necessary to expose a "moral leper" who was running loose in the city, and appealed to the Presbyterian

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[53] AS, Walter Scott Papers, memorandum of conferences with the Lieutenant-Governor, 23 February 1916, 24 February 1916, pp. 48098-108.

Synod of Saskatchewan to read MacKinnon out of the Church.[54] One might have expected better of Walter Scott. The speech reflected little credit on the man who had held the highest elected office in the province for eleven years. Though none would realize it at the time, it was to be the last he would ever make as Premier.

Walter Scott had not anticipated that the 1916 session would be a lengthy one, and he had earlier made plans to leave for the Bahamas at the end of February.[55] With his government under daily attack in the Legislature, it might have been expected that he would postpone the trip, but the deteriorating state of his health, dramatized by the outburst against MacKinnon, made it more essential than ever that he leave. With this Scott himself agreed, albeit reluctantly:

> I am feeling very well indeed but at same time I well know I am on if not a little beyond the danger line. I was down to 3 hours sleep in each 24 hours the last week at home. To confront again what I endured 4 years ago, - well I simply could not do it. Only those who have been in real nervous depression know what it is, and few in as far as I was in, ever come back to tell others what it is.[56]

Calder was once more left to run the government and lead the Liberal forces in the House. His task was not to be an easy one. Already one royal commission, composed of E. L. Wetmore, formerly

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[54] *Leader*, 25 February 1916; *Evening Province*, 25 February 1916.

[55] *Leader*, 29 February 1916.

[56] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, [2 March 1916], pp. 191281-82.

Chief Justice of Saskatchewan, and two Regina businessmen, W. E. Mason and H. G. Smith, had been established by a vote of the Legislature to investigate the road frauds,[57] and with every passing day the scandals surrounding the government assumed wider proportions. On 25 February it was discovered that E. H. Devline, M.L.A. for Kinistino, had suddenly left the city under mysterious circumstances, and the government issued a warrant for his arrest in connection with the road frauds.[58] A few days later J. F. Lindsay, a prominent Swift Current Liberal, was arrested in Moose Jaw and charged with defrauding the public treasury of some $6,000.[59] There were rumours that a delegation of prominent Regina Liberals had met with Calder to demand a royal commission of Supreme Court judges to investigate all the allegations of bribery and corruption that had come to public attention,[60] and on 2 March the Sutherland Committee completed its investigations and presented its report to the Legislature.

The Committee had heard a great deal of testimony, much of it contradictory. Even hearsay evidence had been taken "... in the probability of its leading to the ascertainment of definite facts." Seven M.L.A.'s and one former M.L.A., Gerhard Ens, had been implicated in Brunner's testimony, but four -- Sheppard, Totzke, Nolin and Lochead -- were exonerated on the grounds that no direct evidence of any kind had been produced to show that they had accepted bribes. Brunner had testified that Clayton Peterson, another Regina hotelman, had told him that he intended to pay them, and subsequently that he had paid them certain sums of money. Peterson had denied Brunner's statements on oath and each of the four, with the exception of Lochead who had not been able to attend the Committee's hearings, had also sworn that they had never taken or been offered any money.

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[57] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 115-17, 122. W. E. Mason was manager of the Regina branch of the Canada Permanent Loan Corporation; H. G. Smith was a former President of the Regina Board of Trade.

[58] *Evening Province*, 25 February 1916.

[59] *Ibid.*, 1 March 1916; *Leader*, 1 March 1916.

[60] *Evening Province*, 1-2 March 1916.

Against the other four M.L.A.'s named by Brunner the Committee did find direct evidence of wrongdoing. Brunner had testified that Pierce and Cawthorpe admitted to him that they had received money from Clayton Peterson, that he himself had paid $500 to Ens and that he had seen Peterson give money to Simpson. Pierce, Simpson and Ens had stoutly denied this in their testimony. Cawthorpe, who was confined to hospital in Saskatoon, had not been able to testify. The Committee noted with approval that criminal proceedings had been instituted against Pierce, Cawthorpe, Simpson and Ens, for it believed that such a procedure would be the most satisfactory method of getting at the truth. Its report concluded with a recommendation that a royal commission be appointed to conduct a more thorough investigation of the 1913 bribery charges, as well as a further allegation made during the inquiry of a second attempt to bribe M.L.A.'s before the government brought down its

1915 liquor legislation.[61]

Although the Conservatives had steadfastly refused to take any part in the work of the Sutherland Committee, or give any testimony before it, they accepted its findings with obvious satisfaction. "The course of the Opposition in regard to these charges has been fully vindicated by the action of the government itself," Willoughby told the House, and he and his colleagues welcomed the recommendation to appoint a royal commission. The Liberals disputed Willoughby's claim, but they too were prepared to accept the report, and it was given unanimous approval by the House after a brief debate.[62]

Next day there were dramatic new revelations in the public accounts committee. A. J. McPherson, Chairman of the Local Government Board, admitted under questioning that, in his former capacity as head of the Board of Highway Commissioners, he had awarded the contract for the construction of the Twenty-Fifth Street bridge in Saskatoon to a company in which he had a one-third interest. The acting Premier at once moved that the scope of the royal commission investigating the road frauds be widened to include this new matter. Calder announced that McPherson had already submitted his resignation as Chairman of the Local Government Board, and the House readily agreed to refer the matter to the Wetmore Commission.[63]

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[61] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 146-48.

[62] *Ibid.*, p. 148; *Evening Province*, 3 March 1916; *Leader*, 3 March 1916.

That evening Bradshaw presented a third series of charges to an angry restless House. He alleged that there had been wholesale graft in the construction of the asylum for the insane at North Battleford and the Regina jail, that A. P. McNab, the Minister of Public Works, "knew and permitted such irregularities to exist and continue" and that the Minister of Telephones, George Bell, had a financial interest in certain companies doing business with his department. Again Bradshaw demanded a royal commission of judges. These latest charges did not take the government completely by surprise, for this time Bradshaw had given the acting Premier advanced notice of their nature. Calder nevertheless declined to make any immediate statement, but promised that the government's decision with regard to the request for a royal commission would be communicated to the House when it reconvened after the weekend.[64] The Conservatives, naturally, were jubilant. According to the party's Regina organ, these new charges were infinitely more serious than even the bribery and theft charges which had preceded them:

> The former charges implicated private members and officials of the government. The new charges are directed against the government itself and the heads of departments.... The charges against the government itself are as direct and definite as it would be well possible to make them.... They allege a condition of affairs which, if proven, will ... compel the immediate resignation of the government and an early election.

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[63] *Journals*, 1916, p. 152; *Evening Province*, 3-4 March, 1916; *Leader*, 4 March 1916.

[64] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 157-58; *Leader*, 4 March 1916.

> With a large number of its private members under grave suspicion, with many officials proven corrupt, and with its own integrity badly shaken by these allegations, the defeat of the government would be a foregone conclusion.[65]

True to his word, Calder informed the House on 6 March that the government would appoint a royal commission to investigate Bradshaw's latest allegations, and the House unanimously concurred.[66] The other highlight of the day's proceedings was the presentation of the report of the Magee Committee, which had at long last completed its investigation into the charges of lax enforcement of the Liquor Act and wholesale corruption in the granting of liquor licences. From the evidence presented at its hearings the Committee concluded that J. A. Sheppard had received $700 from a Moose Jaw hotelman as a contribution to Liberal campaign funds, though whether this money had been given for the purpose of securing a liquor licence was not clear. S. R. Moore had received money from a Shaunavon hotelman, though again the Committee could not determine with certainty that the money was intended as payment for Moore's influence in securing a liquor licence for this man. Rev. M. L. Leitch had asked an applicant for a liquor licence for a donation of $1,000 for his church building fund, and had received half that amount without making any improper pledges, and the Committee cleared him of any imputation of wrongdoing. J. F. Bole, a former Regina M.L.A. and head of the government's short-lived dispensary system, and A. P. McNab, the Minister of Public Works, were likewise cleared of the charge of stifling prosecutions under the Liquor Act in return for a promise of political support. Two others, D. C. Lochead and C. H. Cawthorpe, were found to have obtained money under false pretences, in that they had each obtained money from a hotelman to stop a prosecution when the evidence had shown that no charge had ever been laid against the hotels in question. In view of the contradictory nature of much of the testimony that had been presented during its hearings, the Committee recommended that the charges against Sheppard, Moore, Lochead and Cawthorpe be investigated further, and that this be done by means of a royal commission.[67]

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[65] *Evening Province*, 4 March 1916.

[66] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 164-65; *Leader*, 7 March 1916.

This was the conclusion reached by the government as well, and the Committee's recommendations were accepted without a division.[68] The sum of $50,000 was voted to cover the cost of the inquiries,[69] and the Opposition insisted, unsuccessfully as it turned out, that they be consulted in the selection of the commission or commissions to be established. The work of investigating Bradshaw's various charges was divided among three royal commissions. J. A. Calder explained to the House on 9 March that one, consisting of Judges J. T. Brown and E. L. Elwood of the Supreme Court, would investigate the charges of bribery and corruption in connection with the government's liquor legislation of 1913 and 1915, the granting of liquor licences and the enforcement of the liquor law. A second, composed of Chief Justice F. W. G. Haultain and Judges H. W. Newlands and J. H. Lamont of the Supreme Court, would investigate the alleged graft in the construction of the insane asylum at North Battleford and the Regina jail, and the charge that G. A. Bell had a financial interest in companies doing business with the Department of Telephones. The investigation of the road frauds and the awarding of the contract for the construction of the Saskatoon bridge had of course earlier been entrusted to a third royal commission headed by the former Chief Justice of the province, E. L. Wetmore.[70]

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[67] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 161-64.

[68] *Leader*, 7 March 1916.

[69] *Journals*, 1916, p. 167.

The Conservatives accepted the decision to appoint the three royal commissions without comment or criticism, but when a redistribution bill was introduced in the dying days of the session they proved to be anything but quiescent. The bill, which received first reading on 7 March, added four new ridings in the southwestern and northeastern portions of the province. It at once brought howls of protest from the Opposition, who labelled it a bare-faced "gerrymander", introduced on the eve of a provincial general election to save the government from defeat.[71] The government defended the changes on the ground that these districts had experienced a large increase in population since the last redistribution in 1912. Another Liberal pointed out that the women of the province had recently been given the right to vote, and that this was a second reason for increasing the number of seats in the Legislature. The validity of this latter argument was disputed by the Leader of the Opposition, who reminded the House that granting the franchise to women would affect all the constituencies in the province, while only a few ridings in the new districts were affected by the redistribution. It was all to no avail, of course, for with the government's large majority the bill passed easily.[72]

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[70] *Leader*, 9-10 March 1916.

[71] *Ibid.*, 8 March 1916; *Evening Province*, 8 March 1916.

It might well have been expected that the Opposition would accuse the Liberals of a "gerrymander" in 1916, particularly since the Speech from the Throne had given no indication that the government intended to redraw the constituency boundaries during that session. Their contention need not be treated too seriously. It would be naive, of course, to imagine the Liberals drawing up constituency boundaries without any regard to party advantage, but it would be equally naive to suggest that the process of redistribution was influenced wholly or largely by this single consideration. On account of the rapid growth of the province in these early years, attention had also to be paid to probable increases or shifts in population. The location of railway lines was another important factor in determining the boundaries of electoral districts.

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[72] *Leader*, 10 March 1916; *Evening Province*, 10 March 1916; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 6 Geo. V, Chapter 4.

Geographical divisions had less significance in Saskatchewan, although the two branches of the Saskatchewan River and the Qu'Appelle River had marked constituency boundaries from one redistribution to another since 1908.[73] The rapid growth of the province that had made such redistributions necessary in itself virtually ensured that any effort to redraw constituency boundaries solely for party advantage would fail, since a "gerrymander" depended for its success on a relatively stable population distribution from one election to another.

The same inconsistencies were perpetuated in Saskatchewan's electoral maps as could be found elsewhere on the prairies. There were gross disparities in the size of ridings, and urban areas did not receive a fair share of the seats in the Legislature.[74] Taking the total vote polled in the 1912 provincial election as an example, the ten largest ridings had nearly as many votes as the twenty-one smallest. Regina City, the biggest constituency, had more voters than Cumberland, Athabasca, Pinto Creek, Shellbrook and Battleford combined.[75] The 1916 redistribution did nothing to remedy these disparities, nor did it give the cities a stronger voice in the

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[73] For a more detailed treatment of this topic see Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," pp. 142-51.

[74] For a discussion of this phenomenon in the other prairie provinces, see M. S. Donnelly, *The Government of Manitoba* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), pp. 78-80; L. G. Thomas, pp. 136-37, 143-44.

[75] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 91-157.

Legislature. In fact, the number of distinctly urban ridings was reduced from four to three, as the new Prince Albert seat encompassed a portion of the surrounding countryside as well as the city itself. With 10 per cent of the province's population in 1916, Regina, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw still had only one representative each in the fifty-nine seat Legislature.[76]

Redistribution was the last important business of the session, save for a final attempt by J. E. Bradshaw on 14 March to introduce another series of charges before the House. These charges were not really new, but rather an amplification and extension of his earlier allegations that the government had received campaign contributions from the Licensed Victualler's Association and from individual hotelmen. In addition, he specifically accused the Attorney-General and the Minister of Public Works of stifling prosecutions under the Liquor Act. Bradshaw's motion to have these new charges referred to a royal commission was ruled out of order by the Speaker after Turgeon pointed out that they dealt with matters previously disposed of by the Legislature. The acting Premier then informed the Opposition that, notwithstanding the Speaker's ruling, the government would refer two of the charges, those concerning the stifling of prosecutions by Turgeon and McNab and campaign contributions from individual liquor licensees, to the Brown-Elwood Commission. Following this, the Lieutenant-Governor entered the chamber, the usual formalities were gone through and the session was over.[77]

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[76] *Ibid.*, pp. 163-64. The combined population of the three largest cities in 1916 was 64,109; the population of Saskatchewan had reached 647,835 by 1916. (*Census of Prairie Provinces, 1916* pp. 23-70).

It had lasted eight weeks to the day, and a truly remarkable session it had been. Out of the welter of charges and countercharges had come three royal commissions of inquiry which an aggressive Opposition had obtained from a much-harassed government anxious to preserve its reputation. The record of the Scott government in administering the affairs of the province had, on the whole, been a creditable one and, until 1916, one unblemished by scandal. It now seemed that Scott and his colleagues would be driven from office in disgrace as the Roblin government of Manitoba had been the year before. Walter Scott was not personally implicated in the sordid tale of theft, bribery and corruption which had come to light during the past two months, but other members of his cabinet were. One trusted public servant, J. P. Brown, had disappeared from the province and at the end of the session had still not been found. Another, A. J. McPherson, had been forced to tender his resignation on account of improprieties in the awarding of a government contract and Liberal M.L.A.'s stood accused of accepting bribes.

After eleven years of frustrated hopes the Conservatives could at last smell victory in the air.[78] Liberals, on the other hand, remained quietly confident that a thorough investigation would exonerate the government.[79] To their credit, they had acted with despatch once they had become convinced of the seriousness of the situation. The government had given free rein to the three legislative committees which had investigated Bradshaw's charges. These committees had heard every kind of evidence, much of which would have had no place before a royal commission or a court of law. Moreover the government could not be accused of narrow partisanship in its selection of the members of the three royal commissions. Five of the eight men named to the royal commissions were Supreme Court judges, and a sixth was a retired Chief Justice of the province. Two, F. W. G. Haultain and E. L. Elwood, were former political opponents of the government.[80]

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[77] *Journals*, 1916, pp. 182-86; *Leader*, 15 March 1916; *Evening Province*, 15 March 1916.

Events continued to move quickly during the spring and summer of 1916. One by one those who had been implicated in the road frauds were apprehended and brought back to Regina for trial, and the royal commissions set about the laborious task of investigating the various charges which had provided Saskatchewan with its first real political scandal. One of the conspirators in the road frauds had already been arrested, but J. F. Lindsay died of an apparent heart attack before his case could be heard.[81] The chief clerk of the Board of Highway Commissioners, J. P. Brown, was apprehended in San Antonio in mid-March, and one of his accomplices, E. H. Devline, was arrested in Seattle a week later.[82] Another, E. L. H. Smith, the manager of a local branch of the Bank of Ottawa who had been missing from Regina since 19 February, was located in St. Paul, Minnesota in the second week of April, and he too was brought back to stand trial.[83]

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[78] AS, J. E. Bradshaw Papers, C. J. Lutes to Bradshaw, 1 March 1916; *Evening Province*, 7 March 1916.

[79] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Turgeon to A. M. Ranney, 9 March 1916; Walter Scott Papers, Rev. C. Endicott to J. A. Calder, 14 March 1916, p. 49052; J. A. Calder to Rev. C. Endicott, 16 March 1916, p. 49053.

[80] Haultain, of course, had been leader of the Conservative party in Saskatchewan for seven years before being appointed to the bench. E. L. Elwood had run as a Conservative candidate in the 1912 provincial election. (*Legislative Directory*, p. 123.)

Meantime, the three royal commissions had set to work. Their hearings were followed with avid interest, though the lengthy reports of the day's proceedings only infrequently managed to displace war news from the front pages of Regina's newspapers. The Brown-Elwood Commission held its first public sitting on 11 March, with legal counsel provided for J. E. Bradshaw at government expense.[84] The most notable feature of the inquiry into the charges of corruption in connection with the granting of liquor licences and the enforcement of the liquor law was the difficulty of proving anything -- the sworn denial of an M.L.A. or minister standing against the sworn statement of a witness. Seldom was there any evidence in the files of the Attorney-General's Department to show that prosecutions for infractions of the Liquor Act had been withdrawn.[85] After two weeks some of Bradshaw's charges had collapsed altogether, notably two charges against C. A. Cawthorpe and two more against the Speaker, J. A. Sheppard.[86]

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[81] *Leader*, 6 March 1916.

[82] *Ibid.*, 17 March 1916; *Evening Province*, 25 March 1916.

[83] *Leader*, 11 April 1916, 14 April 1916.

[84] *Ibid.*, 13 March 1916.

By the end of March the Commission had moved on to the next phase of its inquiry, the bribery charges. Frank Brunner took the stand on 29 March and described again how the bribes had been distributed to H. C. Pierce and the others to influence them to vote against the government's banish-the-bar legislation in 1913. Under cross-examination Brunner's testimony began to break down. He was not sure of his dates, and H. Y. McDonald, counsel for several of the accused M.L.A.'s, was able to show that Brunner had been unsuccessful in securing a government job.[87] On 20 April H. C. Pierce denied Brunner's story and declared that Brunner had told him in 1915 that the brewers had $500,000 to defeat the Scott government on its proposed temperance legislation.[88]

Four days later the Commission completely exonerated J. A.

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[85] *Ibid.*, 21-24 March 1916.

[86] *Ibid.*, 25 March 1916, 28-29 March 1916.

[87] *Ibid.*, 30 March 1916.

[88] *Ibid.*, 21 April 1916.

Sheppard, A. F. Totzke, D. C. Lochead and J. O. Nolin of the charge of accepting bribes, and then adjourned for a month.[89] The public hearings resumed on 20 May and continued for another six weeks. The last public sitting took place on 6 July, and the report of the Brown-Elwood Commission was released a little over a month later.[90] There was enough in it to please both sides. Of the twenty-seven charges which Bradshaw had made during the 1916 session of the Legislature concerning bribery, the obtaining of political contributions from liquor licensees and the stifling of prosecutions, two were dropped by his counsel and fifteen were dismissed by the Commission. Of the remaining ten charges, Judges Brown and Elwood agreed in their findings in seven cases affecting four private members.

J. A. Sheppard and S. R. Moore were found guilty of receiving money from hotelmen to secure liquor licences, H. C. Pierce of accepting a bribe to oppose the 1913 banish-the-bar bill, and C. H. Cawthorpe of both accepting a bribe and receiving money in return for a promise to stifle a prosecution against a liquor licensee. In the other three cases, involving A. P. McNab and two former M.L.A.'s, J. F. Bole and Gerhard Ens, the Commission could not agree. Judge Brown concluded that no case had been made to establish the truth of these charges, while Judge Elwood found that there was sufficient evidence either to support the charge or at least to establish some connection between the charge and the man named. As for the allegations of a second conspiracy to bribe M.L.A.'s before the government brought down its new temperance legislation in 1915, the Commission reported that it had not found any concrete evidence "... that there was any conspiracy as alleged, or at all, or that any attempts were actually made to bribe any such members."[91]

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[89] *Ibid.*, 25 April 1916.

[90] *Ibid.*, 7 July 1916. Lengthy summaries of the report of the Brown-Elwood Commission appeared in the *Leader* and the *Evening Province* on 21 August 1916.

Liberals received the findings of the Brown-Elwood Commission with satisfaction, claiming that the Scott government as a government had been completely cleared.[92] For their part, Conservatives pointed out that Bradshaw had unquestionably opened up ground for legitimate inquiry, thus clearing the air and cleaning up the Legislature.[93] W. B. Willoughby expressed satisfaction with the report, while lamely complaining that only specific charges against individual members of the House had been referred to the Brown-Elwood Commission for investigation, and that the government had attempted in various unspecified ways to prevent hotelkeepers and other witnesses from testifying.[94]

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[91] SLAO, Sessional Papers, First Session 1917, No. 1, *Report of the Brown-Elwood Royal Commission.* The other cabinet ministers and the private members whom Bradshaw had accused of wrongdoing -- W. F. A. Turgeon, George Langley, A. F. Totzke, J. O. Nolin, D. C. Lochead and S. S. Simpson -- were completely exonerated.

[92] *Leader*, 21 August 1916.

[93] *Evening Province*, 22 August 1916.

The other two inquiries proceeded much more slowly. The Haultain Commission began its investigation on 14 March,[95] concentrating its attention during the early months on the construction of the insane asylum at North Battleford. Most of the evidence was of a technical nature. Expert witnesses testified as to the original contracts and J. F. Bryant and F. W. Turnbull, counsel for J. E. Bradshaw, sought to prove that the cost of the building had been inflated through waste, mismanagement and graft. The public hearings adjourned in September with the approach of the fall sittings of the Supreme Court. At this point Bradshaw's lawyers had not yet finished presenting their evidence concerning the construction of the asylum, nor had government counsel had any opportunity for cross-examination. The other matters under investigation had not even been touched, and no report was expected from the Haultain Commission until some time in 1918.[96]

The inquiry into the road frauds was delayed for a time by the refusal of W. E. Mason to serve on the Wetmore Commission, and by the absence from the province of the three conspirators -- Brown, Devline and Smith -- upon whose testimony so much would depend. By mid-April all three had been returned to Regina, and auditors began examining the paysheets and account books in the files of the Board of Highway Commissioners. Public hearings commenced on 19 April, with G. D. Mackie, a civil engineer and Commissioner of the city of Moose Jaw, filling Mason's place on the royal commission. The hearings continued on a more or less continuous basis for months. Brown, Smith and Devline were on the witness stand for much of April, May and June. The testimony of Brown was contradicted in many particulars by Smith's; neither was judged a reliable witness by the Commission.[97]

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[94] *Ibid.*, 9 September 1916.

[95] *Leader*, 15 March 1916.

[96] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, series HWC (2), C. H. Ireland to Calder, 11 September 1916. Ireland, Calder's private secretary in the Department of Railways, served as secretary to the Haultain Commission.

J. E. Bradshaw appeared before the Wetmore Commission early in July, and testified that he had suspected for years that there were irregularities in the road work being done in his constituency and others nearby. He had drawn this to the attention of the provincial Conservative organizer, W. J. Gallon, "about a year and a half ago," but claimed that when the Legislature met in January 1916 he had had no documentary evidence to prove that frauds had been committed. His charges in the Legislature had been based solely on letters and affidavits which Gallon had managed to collect from people in various parts of the province where road work had been authorized but never carried out.[98] Gallon was thereupon called as a witness. He told the Commission that his suspicions of J. P.

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[97] SLAO, Sessional Papers, First Session 1917, No. 2, *Interim Report of the Wetmore Royal Commission*, pp. 1-10, 37-39, 45-48.

[98] *Evening Province*, 6 July 1916.

Brown had first been aroused by a friend in September 1915. Gallon had then approached a civil servant in Regina to secure concrete evidence of the road frauds. This civil servant had removed cancelled cheques and progressive and final estimates from government files, handed them over to the Conservatives for copying and managed to return them without the knowledge of his superiors.[99] Gallon refused to divulge the name of his accomplice,[100] but on 18 July Alexander Milne, a clerk in the Auditor's Branch who had since enlisted in the C.E.F., confessed that he was the one who had given the Conservatives the evidence they needed to prove that Brown and the others were defrauding the public treasury.[101]

The Wetmore Commission began its investigation of the other phase of its inquiry, the awarding of the contract for the Saskatoon Bridge, at the end of September,[102] and thereafter divided its time between the two. In mid-October E. L. Wetmore and his two colleagues decided to adjourn for the winter as soon as they had completed their inquiry into the road frauds, and present an interim report on all matters which had been investigated to that point.[103]

The courts were also busy during the summer and fall of

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[99] *Leader,* 8 July 1916.

[100] *Ibid.*, 8 July 1916, 12 July 1916, 14 July 1916.

[101] *Leader,* 19 July 1916.

[102] *Ibid.*, 27 September 1916.

[103] *Evening Province,* 18 October 1916.

1916. J. P. Brown was tried in Regina district court in June, found guilty of forgery, uttering forged documents and fraudulently obtaining some $59,000 from the public treasury, and sentenced to seven years in the Prince Albert penitentiary.[104] His two accomplices were not brought to trial until the fall. E. H. Devline, M.L.A. for Kinistino, pleaded guilty to charges of forgery, uttering forged cheques and fraud, and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for his crimes.[105] The jury failed to reach a verdict in the trial of E. L. H. Smith, the bank manager.[106] Three M.L.A.'s were charged with accepting bribes to oppose the banish-the-bar bill in December 1913: Gerhard Ens was cleared,[107] H. C. Pierce was found guilty[108] and the jury trying C. H. Cawthorpe was unable to reach a verdict.[109] Alexander Milne, the clerk who had removed documents from government files and passed them on to the Opposition, was dismissed from his position and charged with theft. His case was heard early in October, and the jury pronounced a verdict of

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[104] *Ibid.*, 28 June 1916; *Leader*, 29 June 1916.

[105] *Evening Province*, 15 September 1916, 11 October 1916.

[106] *Leader*, 7 October 1916.

[107] *Evening Province*, 22 September 1916.

[108] *Ibid.*, 21 September 1916; *Regina Daily Post* [hereafter cited as *Daily Post*], 2 November 1916.

[109] *Evening Province*, 23 September 1916, 5 October 1916.

"guilty without criminal intent."[110]

Political prospects for the Liberals were certainly brighter in the fall of 1916 than they had been six months earlier. Those guilty of wrongdoing had been brought to justice, but it remained to be seen how the public would judge the government's efforts to put its house in order. For a time Premier Scott had apparently favoured a "snap" election in May or June,[111] but no writs were ever issued. By law an election need not be called for another year, and the Liberals doubtless concluded that this time could be more profitably spent in strengthening the party for its next test at the polls.

A matter of much more immediate concern to the party hierarchy was the state of Walter Scott's health. His departure from the province in February had given rise to rumours that he would shortly be forced to give up the premiership.[112] These rumours persisted, and indeed were given added force as the passage of time made it clear that his health was not improving. In September Scott again became seriously ill and had to leave for the south.[113] On 16 October his resignation was made public with the announcement that his physicians had ordered a complete rest from all work and responsibility for a year at least.[114] Walter Scott's resignation was of course a matter of great regret to his colleagues and his friends, but to those who had been aware of his failing health it was not entirely unexpected. "The actual fact," J. W. Dafoe confided to Clifford Sifton, "is that for at least four years Walter has been neither physically nor mentally capable of carrying the burden of the premiership...."[115] Scott was still a relatively young man, only forty-nine, but his political career seemed at an end.

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[110] *Ibid.*, 22 August 1916, 8 September 1916; *Leader*, 6 October 1916.

[111] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 3 March 1916, pp. 191279-80.

[112] *Evening Province*, 28 February 1916, 18 March 1916.

[113] *Ibid.*, 16 September 1916, 29 September 1916.

An able, energetic and popular Premier, Walter Scott had led his party to victory in three successive provincial elections, each by a wider margin than before. Though he was not the master of intricate political detail that Calder was -- it was the Minister of Railways who had kept the party organization in such fine tune -- Scott had proven himself a match for any opponent on a public platform or on the floor of the Legislature. He had gathered around him a group of able colleagues who, from all outward appearances, worked together in harmony, avoiding the internecine feuds which had erupted within the ranks of the Alberta Liberal party from time to time since 1905.[116]

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[114] *Leader*, 17 October 1916.

[115] PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, J. W. Dafoe to Sifton, 17 October 1916, p. 160906. According to J. A. Calder, he and Sen. J. H. Ross had had several conversations with the ailing Premier in 1916, and "in the end we decided that in his own best interest he should resign." Scott "... fully agreed, without hesitation" and that same evening he handed his resignation to Sen. Ross on the understanding that it would be transmitted to the Lieutenant-Governor as soon as the party agreed on a successor. (Turner, "Reminiscences of J. A. Calder," p. 70.)

The Premier's long absences from the province on account of poor health had left much of the day to day work of running the government in the hands of his trusted lieutenant, J. A. Calder. It was Calder who seemed the likely successor when Scott stepped down in 1916. Calder's reputation as the skilful and ruthless head of the Liberal "machine" had to some extent obscured the very real ability he had shown in leading the government forces in the House, particularly during the trying days of February and March 1916. A year younger than Walter Scott, he did not have Scott's warm personal appeal, yet he was, in the opinion of at least one observer, "... far stronger in the Province than his critics and enemies think he is."[117]

Following the receipt of Walter Scott's resignation, the Lieutenant-Governor invited J. A. Calder to form a government. The acting Premier asked for time to consider the matter and consult with his colleagues, and after doing so informed Lake that he had decided not to accept the premiership.[118] When pressed by M.L.A.'s and party supporters in Regina to change his mind, Calder apparently informed them that until his name had been cleared of any hint of wrongdoing in connection with the road frauds, "... there was no office in the gift of the Crown or of the Liberal Party I could accept."[119] The interim report of the Wetmore Commission was not expected for some months; a new party leader and Premier would have to be chosen at once.

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[116] See L. G. Thomas, pp. 88, 91-93, 108-13, 130-32.

[117] PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, J. W. Dafoe to Sifton, 17 October 1916, p. 160906.

[118] *Leader*, 19 October 1916.

The news that Calder had declined to form a government intensified speculation as to who the next Premier of Saskatchewan might be. Among those touted as possible successors to Walter Scott were two Liberal M.P.'s, G. E. McCraney of Saskatoon and W. M. Martin of Regina, and George Langley, the Minister of Municipal Affairs.[120] In fact, there seems never to have been any doubt once Calder declined the honour that the mantle of leadership would fall on William Melville Martin.[121] Forty years of age in 1916, Martin had long been regarded as a coming man in Liberal circles, and his name had frequently been mentioned during the year as a possible addition to a reorganized Scott government or as the successor to the ailing Premier.[122] He had first arrived in Regina in 1903, fresh from Osgoode Hall, to join his cousin, James Balfour, in the practice of law. Like so many others in that profession "Billy" Martin had soon been attracted to politics. When Walter Scott resigned his seat in Parliament in 1905 to lead the provincial Liberals against Haultain, the nomination in West Assiniboia had been offered to him. Martin could not be persuaded to accept it, but three years later he agreed to contest the new Regina federal seat for the Liberals. He won easily, by 760 votes, and increased his majority in the reciprocity election of 1911.[123] Martin's personal integrity was unquestioned and, as a federal M.P., he had not been tainted by the scandals of the past few months. This was perhaps Martin's greatest asset in 1916. The local Liberals must certainly have seen that his presence would bolster the image of a beleaguered government whose mandate would have to be renewed within a year.

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[119] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. A. Calder to Laurier, 8 November 1916, p. 193722-24.

[120] *Daily Post,* 19 October 1916.

[121] PAC, Clifford Sifton Papers, J. W. Dafoe to Sifton, 17 October 1916, p. 160906.

[122] *Evening Province,* 24 February 1916, 10 March 1916, 27 April 1916, 17 October 1916.

It was to Martin, then, that the party turned in its hour of need. At a gathering of Liberal supporters in Regina he agreed to lead the provincial party, and on 20 October he accepted the Lieutenant-Governor's invitation to form a government. Martin's government was sworn in the same day. It proved to be new in name but virtually unchanged from its predecessor in terms of personnel. Martin himself took the portfolio of Education, as Walter Scott had done. J. A. Calder continued as Minister of Railways and, as the senior member of the cabinet, became President of the Executive Council as well. Motherwell, Turgeon, Langley and McNab retained the portfolios they had held during the last days of the Scott regime. George Bell continued as Minister of Telephones, but relinquished his responsibilities as Provincial Treasurer to Charles Avery Dunning, general manager of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and, apart from the Premier, the only other newcomer in the cabinet.[124]

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[123] *Leader*, 31 August 1918; *Directory of Federal Elections*, p. 43.

Dunning's entry into the government was something of a surprise. His name had not been mentioned in any of the speculation that had filled the columns of Regina's newspapers ever since Premier Scott's resignation had been announced, though he was far from unknown in the province. Dunning had come to the North-West Territories from Great Britain in 1902, and homesteaded near Yorkton. He became a successful farmer and, like so many others during those years, Dunning soon joined the S.G.G.A. It was through the farmer's organization that he rose to public prominence, first as a district director and then as vice-president of the Grain Growers. Dunning was best known to the farmers of the province for his work as general manager of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. In the five years since its inception, the "Co-op" had become the largest grain handling company in the country. Starting with only 46 elevators in 1911-1912, the Company's network of elevators had expanded to 230 by 1916, and construction of its first terminal elevator at the Lakehead was also well under way by the latter date. In its first year of business the "Co-op" had handled 3,250,000 bushels of grain;

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[124] *Leader*, 20 October 1916; *Daily Post*, 20 October 1916.

in its fifth, 43,198,000 bushels. The number of shareholders had also risen dramatically; from 8,000 in July 1911 to more than 18,000 in 1916. The story of the Company's success after five years of operation was the story of Dunning's success as general manager. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the last balance sheet Dunning presented to the shareholders, one that showed a record profit of more than $757,000 on the year's operation for 1915-1916.[125]

Dunning was the third prominent Grain Grower to enter the cabinet, joining W. R. Motherwell and George Langley as spokesmen for the farmers' interests in the councils of the government. An interlocking of personnel between the leadership of the S.G.G.A. and the leadership of the government at Regina had long been a feature of Saskatchewan public life. It had proven over the years to be a mutually beneficial arrangement, assuring for the farmers' organization a sympathetic consideration of its demands and for the Liberals the continued support of rural voters. The S.G.G.A. was easily the largest and most representative organization in the province. By 1916 there were over 1,300 separate "locals" scattered across the province, with a total membership of 28,000 out of a possible 104,000 farmers. This meant that there was a Grain Growers' "local" with an average membership of twenty each in almost every farm community in Saskatchewan.[126] Little wonder, then, that the Liberals had so assiduously cultivated the support of this powerful farmers' organization in the past, and were continuing to do so with the inclusion of Charles Dunning in the new government.

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[125] Brennan, pp. 2-16, 23-26.

[126] Lipset, p. 52.

Dunning's popularity among the Grain Growers would certainly do the Liberals no harm, but there were other equally important reasons why Martin would have wanted him in the cabinet. The administrative ability he had demonstrated as general manager of the Saskatchewan "Co-op" well suited Dunning for the task of handling the province's finances and safeguarding the public treasury against any further looting by unscrupulous government officials or politicians. Never having been an active member of the Liberal or any other political party, he could not help but bolster the image of a government shaken by scandal. Dunning was certainly aware of the cloud of suspicion that still hung over the Legislative Buildings, yet this seems not to have deterred him from leaving the secure world of business for the much more uncertain world of politics. He was later to remark at a Grain Growers' convention in Moose Jaw that "I always found on the farm that if the pig pen needed cleaning out I had to get inside to do it."[127] As a Grain Grower Dunning professed to find the Liberal party more to his liking than the Conservative,[128] though his justification for such a preference, the attitude of the two on the tariff question, bore little if any relevance to provincial politics. Whatever his reasons for entering the political arena in 1916, the significant thing was that Dunning had chosen to cast his lot with W. M. Martin rather than with W. B. Willoughby.

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[127] *Leader*, 15 February 1917.

[128] *Ibid.*, 2 November 1916.

Shortly after the new government took office, Premier Martin issued a manifesto outlining the direction it would follow in administering the affairs of the province. It would be only a general statement, he declared, for it was his intention to call a provincial Liberal convention in the near future for the purpose of drafting a more detailed platform. He expressed absolute confidence in the integrity of every member of the government but pledged that if the two royal commissions still at work found any member of the government or any public servant guilty of dishonest or improper conduct, he would at once be removed from office. As for the report of the Brown-Elwood Commission, the Premier remarked that it had shown "that no member of the Government, no member of the Liquor Licence Commission, no employee of the Liquor Licence Branch of the public service in a period of ten years was involved or compromised in the slightest degree." To those M.L.A.'s who had been found guilty of wrongdoing, he intimated that if they did not resign their fellow-members would take such action at the next session of the Legislature "as will completely satisfy the people of the Province that the Liberal Party ... is determined to maintain the highest ideals of ... public morality."[129]

Turning to matters of policy, Martin pledged his government to exert every effort to lighten the burden of Saskatchewan farmers and make farm life more profitable and more attractive. The agricultural credit legislation of 1913 would be resurrected and put into operation. Railway branch line construction, then at a standstill on account of the war, would be encouraged wherever possible, and the fight for tariff reductions would be carried on until success was achieved. Martin also indicated that his government would continue to reform the educational system, especially in respect to children's attendance at school and strict observance of the use of English as the language of instruction. No Liberal statement of policy would have been complete without some reference to the long-standing and still unresolved dispute with Ottawa over natural resources. Like his predecessor, Martin promised to demand in the strongest terms that Saskatchewan be given control of its public domain.[130]

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[129] *Ibid.*, 25 October 1916.

W. B. Willoughby, meanwhile, was touring the province, addressing Conservative rallies and nominating conventions. "We are out to win at the next election," he told Conservatives in Rosetown. "The people have seen that it is time for a change."[131] Willoughby's speeches left little doubt what the main issues in that contest would be. Referring to the revelations of bribery and graft that had come to light during the year, he declared at one meeting:

> It is true that half the tale will never be told, but even so members of the house and friends and supporters of the Liberal party have been convicted of crimes and sentenced to

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[130] *Ibid.*

[131] *Daily Post,* 2 November 1916.

> the penitentiary. And if the Conservatives are put in the place of the Liberal ministers, who can tell what else may be revealed when the records of departments are investigated, and the employees freer to tell of what they know....[132]

A Conservative administration would abolish the Board of Highway Commissioners and eliminate waste and extravagance in government spending, in part by reducing the size of the cabinet. There were as well the oft-repeated promises to take over all rural telephone lines and restore the government-operated hail insurance scheme which the Liberals had abandoned, hardly the stuff of which election victories are made.

The Conservative leader also reiterated his earlier pledges to make English the only language of instruction in the public schools.[133] Here he was on surer ground, for the climate of opinion engendered by the war was becoming distinctly hostile to the continuation of any "privileges" which might have been granted in the past to Saskatchewan's European minorities. During 1916 three of the largest public bodies in the province had each in turn expressed itself on the subject. In February the Grain Growers demanded that every child be taught in the English language.[134] In March the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association called for an amendment to the School Act prohibiting the teaching of foreign languages in the first five grades. After the vote had been taken at the Trustees' convention, some 150 non-English delegates withdrew in protest, demanding that a new vote be held and that the resolution be translated into French, Ruthenian, Polish and German. The request brought cries of outraged protest from English-speaking delegates, and it was firmly rejected.[135] Interviewed after the convention had ended, one delegate declared that it was scandalous that foreigners should ask British trustees to translate resolutions into four languages. He urged his fellow-trustees to organize to fight these people "as our sons and brothers were fighting them on the continent of Europe."[136] The stand taken by the Grain Growers and the School Trustees was overwhelmingly endorsed at the annual convention of the S.A.R.M. later in March, and throughout the summer individual municipalities added their voices to the cry for "English only."[137]

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[132] *Ibid.*, 3 November 1916.

[133] *Ibid.*, 2-3 November 1916, 7 November 1916.

[134] *Guide*, 23 February 1916.

The next provincial election might not come for some months, the government having decided to hold another session before dissolving the Legislature,[138] but an opportunity to test the political waters was provided in the form of three by-elections held during November and early December. J. A. Sheppard, one of the M.L.A.'s found guilty by the Brown-Elwood Commission, had submitted his resignation on 15 October and asked that a by-election be called as soon as possible so that he might vindicate himself before his constituents.[139] The decision to hold another session meant that the new Premier and Provincial Treasurer would have to secure seats in the Legislature at once. Martin decided to run in Regina, which had been vacant since July 1915, and Dunning was nominated in Kinistino, the seat held by E. H. Devline until his conviction for forgery and fraud.[140] To the Liberals' great delight, the Conservatives decided after lengthy deliberation not to run a candidate against the Premier.[141] They did nominate a man to contest the by-election in Kinistino, but he withdrew at the last moment and Dunning too was elected by acclamation.[142]

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[135] *Leader*, 3 March 1916.

[136] *Saskatoon Star*, 4 March 1916.

[137] *Leader*, 11 March 1916; Huel, pp. 106-107.

[138] *Daily Post*, 20 October 1916.

The Liberals, and particularly J. A. Calder, were elated. "I need not tell you," the Minister of Railways wrote to Laurier, "that the whole situation for months past has been a most difficult one to handle and while we are not yet completely out of the woods I can begin to see daylight." The bringing in of Martin and Dunning had proved to be a "master stroke" which had strengthened the party all across the province. Organization work was now in full swing in preparation for the next election.[143] The Premier was equally sanguine. "If we can get along well now for the next six months," he informed a convalescing Walter Scott in Philadelphia, "I think a general election should result very favorably for us."[144] Liberal optimism was not dimmed by the result in Moose Jaw County, where J. A. Sheppard was defeated by 90 votes, for Premier Martin had declared at the outset that the government would take no part in the contest.[145] The *Leader*, noting that virtually the entire Opposition had toured the riding on behalf of the Conservative candidate, dismissed the result with these words:

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[139] *Ibid.*, 19 October 1916.

[140] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. M. Martin to Laurier, 30 October 1916, p. 193608; *Leader*, 30 October 1916.

[141] *Daily Post*, 9 November 1916; *Leader*, 10 November 1916.

[142] *Leader*, 10 November 1916, 14 November 1916.

> The significant thing about the Moose Jaw County election is not the defeat of Mr. Sheppard, but the failure of the Conservative party to secure a more pronounced declaration in its favor. If with its whole strength thrown into a single by-election, and a by-election held under the peculiar circumstances and conditions which prevailed in Moose Jaw County, the Willoughby Opposition could make no better showing than it did, then it faces an overwhelming and certain defeat when a general election is called and the whole strength of the Government and Liberal party is thrown against it.[146]

The Liberals were given further reason for optimism when the interim report of the Wetmore Commission was made public early in the new year. The Commission was in unanimous agreement that no member of the government had had any knowledge of the road frauds or participated in the proceeds of those frauds. The only member of the Legislature connected with the frauds had been E. H. Devline. Devline, J. P. Brown, J. F. Lindsay and E. L. H. Smith had together managed to defraud the public treasury of $64,395,[147] and much of the report was devoted to a detailed explanation of how they had been able to do it. The key figure had been J. P. Brown, who had joined the Territorial Department of Public Works in 1903, and became Chief Clerk of the Board of Highway Commissioners when it was established in 1912. It was his intimate knowledge of departmental procedures, his clever penmanship and the complete trust of his superiors that had made the frauds possible. With the government spending from $700,000 to $1,500,000 each year on road work, awarding hundreds of contracts and issuing thousands of cheques in payment for work done, Brown had come to see that it would be a relatively simple matter to divert some of this money into his own pocket. He and his accomplices had employed two methods to defraud the public treasury: forged contracts for road work and forged pay lists.

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[143] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. A. Calder to Laurier, 8 November 1916, pp. 193721-24.

[144] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to W. Scott, 17 November 1916, p. 167.

[145] *Daily Post*, 14 November 1916; *Legislative Directory*, p. 121.

[146] *Leader*, 18 December 1916.

In the first, Brown had drawn up contracts between the Board of Highway Commissioners and several fictitious contractors, forging the signatures of A. J. McPherson, F. J. Robinson or H. S. Carpenter, the three men who had served as Chairman of the Board between 1912 and 1916. Then, at what he judged to be the opportune moment, Brown had put through vouchers in payment for the pretended road work, again forging the signature of the Chairman and attaching a document purporting to be the report of the engineer who had inspected the work. Once each voucher had been approved by the auditors in the Treasury Department a cheque was issued which was then cashed by one of his accomplices, Brown being careful never to cash the cheques himself. Brown and Devline had also forged whole pay sheets, added the names of fictitious foremen and the appropriate certificates, and passed these along to the Treasury Department for approval. In due course cheques were issued in the names of the men allegedly employed on the road gang, and these were cashed by Devline at banks in his constituency.[148]

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[147] *Interim Report of the Wetmore Royal Commission*, pp. 53, 68-69. Lengthy summaries of the report appeared in the *Leader* and *Daily Post*, 8 January 1917.

So cleverly had the frauds been perpetrated that the government auditors had continued to pass the bogus vouchers and pay lists without question for four years. The first person to suspect that something was amiss, the Commission concluded, was not J. E. Bradshaw or any other Conservative, but an employee at the Bank of Ottawa branch where E. L. H. Smith kept accounts for three of the fictitious contractors. This bank clerk, whose name was H. C. Morris, had conveyed his suspicions to a Conservative friend who had in turn alerted W. J. Gallon, the party's chief provincial organizer. Once having obtained the names of Brown's fictitious contractors and the amounts paid to them from the co-operative clerk in the Auditor's Branch, it had been a comparatively simple matter for Gallon to track down the frauds by examining the public accounts.[149]

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[148] *Interim Report of the Wetmore Royal Commission*, pp. 12-57.

The final step had come on 10 February 1916, when J. E. Bradshaw made his charges in the House. Now, almost a year later, the findings of the Wetmore Commission had corroborated those charges. A trusted government employee had indeed stolen public money, and members of the Liberal party, one of them an M.L.A., had helped him. Yet the government, as a government, had been completely exonerated, and Liberal spirits were high as they prepared to meet the House on 25 January 1917.[150]

The first business of the sixth, and last, session of Saskatchewan's Third Legislature was the selection of a Speaker to replace J. A. Sheppard. Dr. R. M. Mitchell, the member for Weyburn who had served as Deputy Speaker during the previous session, was chosen to succeed him.[151] The struggle on the battlefields of Europe, now in its third year, received brief mention in the Speech from the Throne, and the hope was expressed that at war's end provision would be made for returned soldiers to settle on Crown lands in the province. As might have been expected, the Speech also made reference to the findings of the Brown-Elwood and Wetmore royal commissions, noting with satisfaction that no member of the government had been found guilty of any improper conduct, and that the effect of the inquiries had been to "vindicate the honour and integrity of every Minister of the Crown."[152] To this last phrase W. B. Willoughby took exception, and during the Throne Speech debate he reminded the Liberals again of Judge Elwood's findings in the case of A. P. McNab, the Minister of Public Works. Apart from this, he expressed himself as fully satisfied with the results of the two inquiries. He was more critical of the recent increase in the size of the cabinet, contending that no more than five ministers were needed in a province the size of Saskatchewan.[153] The address in reply was approved unanimously on 30 January,[154] and the members got down to work.

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[149] *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

[150] AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to A. MacKenzie, 12 January 1917, pp. 11575-76.

[151] *Journals*, First Session 1917, p. 7; *Leader*, 26 January 1917.

The six-week session proved to be an uneventful one. The business of the House was conducted with despatch, and there was little of that partisan wrangling that had marked proceedings the year before. In fact, as the Liberals never tired of reminding their opponents when the reports of the Brown-Elwood and Wetmore Commissions were discussed in the House, there was little to criticize in the government's handling of the whole affair. The royal commissions had been permitted to operate without any interference, and those accused of wrongdoing, whether public servants or party members, had been brought to justice.[155] Three of the M.L.A.'s implicated in Bradshaw's charges and found guilty by the royal commissions were no longer sitting in the House: Devline was in prison, J. A. Sheppard had been defeated in his bid for re-election, and H. C. Pierce submitted his resignation the day before the Legislature opened.[156] A fourth, C. H. Cawthorpe, was expelled from the House during the session and another, S. R. Moore, was publicly read out of the Liberal party by Premier Martin after he refused to resign his seat.[157]

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[152] *Journals,* First Session 1917, pp. 8-10.

[153] *Leader,* 30 January 1917.

[154] *Ibid.,* 31 January 1917.

This thorough house-cleaning took the initiative away from the Conservatives. There were demands that Bradshaw apologize to those members whom he had accused of wrongdoing but who had subsequently been cleared. Some Liberals went farther, and challenged the member for Prince Albert to resign his seat. Bradshaw steadfastly refused to do either, maintaining that the results had fully justified his insistence on a complete and impartial inquiry.[158] The debate was not a particularly lengthy one, and in due course both reports were adopted by a unanimous vote of the House.[159] The Leader of the Opposition subsequently hinted that there were more revelations of graft and corruption to come,[160] but no new charges were presented during the session, and before the House prorogued it agreed on a straight party vote to restrict the scope of all further investigation by the Wetmore Commission to specific charges, except in the case of the Saskatoon bridge.[161]

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[155] *Ibid.*, 3 February 1917, 6-7 February 1917, 9-10 February 1917, 12 February 1917.

[156] *Journals*, First Session 1917, p. 11.

[157] *Leader*, 9 February 1917, 13 February 1917.

[158] *Ibid.*, 6-7 February 1917, 9-10 February 1917.

With an eye to the coming election, W. B. Willoughby moved on 16 February that all Saskatchewan residents on active service overseas be permitted to vote in their home ridings. The government was quick to agree with the spirit of Willoughby's motion, but preferred to see the soldiers given separate representation in the next Legislature. W. F. A. Turgeon introduced an amendment to this effect, stipulating that one or more seats be created for representatives who would be elected by the soldiers exclusively. It carried by a vote of 28 to 3, and the Attorney-General intimated that the appropriate legislation would be introduced later in the session.[162]

This brought howls of protest from the Conservative press, which accused the government of trying to "hive" the soldiers,[163] and from veterans' and other groups.[164] Circulars were distributed among soldiers in the province warning ominously that under the proposed legislation the votes of the 27,000 Saskatchewan residents then on active service would be withdrawn from their regular constituencies "... thereby leaving the selection of members of the legislature to those who have not volunteered for active service and to MEN OF ALIEN ENEMY BIRTHS AND SYMPATHIES."[165] The circulars Premier Martin dismissed as being politically motivated,[166] but to others who objected to the proposed legislation he replied that "by giving Soldiers who are at the front special respresentations [*sic*] in the Legislature, they will be able to exercise far more influence in matters pertaining to Returned Soldiers and other questions of that kind than they can possibly do in any other way." When the war was over, and the men returned, they would be able to appeal not only to their local M.L.A., but also to the special representatives elected by the soldiers themselves.[167]

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[159] *Journals*, First Session 1917, pp. 34, 45-46.

[160] *Leader*, 2 March 1917.

[161] *Journals*, First Session 1917, pp. 146-47; *Leader*, 10 March 1917.

[162] *Journals*, First Session 1917, pp. 58-60; *Leader*, 17 February 1917.

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[163] See, for instance, *Daily Post*, 28 February 1917.

[164] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Soldiers' Wives and Mothers League of Saskatoon to Martin, 27 February 1917, p. 9530; Army and Navy Veterans of Canada to Martin, 27 February 1917, pp. 9532-33; Returned Soldiers' Association of Moose Jaw to Martin, 6 March 1917, p. 9609.

[165] *Ibid.*, circular signed by "Veteran of the Great War," 23 February 1917, p. 9527. (emphasis in original.)

[166] *Ibid.*, W. M. Martin to J. R. Bone, 3 May 1917, p. 9624.

The Soldiers' Representation Act, introduced on 6 March, provided for the election of three members-at-large by residents of Saskatchewan serving overseas. One was to be elected by those serving in Great Britain, the others by those in France and Belgium. The Conservatives continued to oppose the principle of separate representation for any group, and claimed that most of the soldiers in the province were opposed to it as well. D. J. Wylie, whose own sons were already in uniform, objected that the bill would discourage recruiting, since enlistment would deprive a man of the right to vote in his home riding.[168] The bill passed, of course, despite last minute efforts by the Opposition to delay third reading by introducing amendments changing its title to "The Soldiers' Misrepresentation Act" and "An Act to Deprive Members of the Canadian Expeditionary Forces of Their Rights of Citizenship."[169]

The House also approved a new prohibition bill giving legislative sanction to the wishes of the electorate as recorded in the December 1916 referendum. The sections in the old law relating to government dispensaries were eliminated, and the sale of liquor was forbidden to anyone and by anyone except physicians and druggists, who might buy and sell limited quantities under special permits for medicinal purposes. The Saskatchewan Temperance Act, as it was called, did not attempt to prohibit the importation of liquor from outside the province, nor did it limit the amount of liquor which could be kept or consumed in a dwelling house, which was the only place where liquor could be consumed.[170] During the debate on the bill marked differences of opinion were expressed as to the extent of provincial powers to restrict the liquor traffic. W. B. Willoughby and the Conservatives argued that a recent federal statute, the Doherty Act, gave Saskatchewan the right to ban the importation of liquor completely. On the other hand, the Liberals contended that any provincial law which attempted to interfere with interprovincial trade would be declared *ultra vires* by the courts.[171]

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[167] *Ibid.*, W. M. Martin to Sgt. L. B. Sweet, 2 March 1917, pp. 9528-29; W. M. Martin to W. Moore, 8 March 1917, p. 9602.

[168] *Leader*, 9 March 1917.

[169] *Ibid.*, 10 March 1917.

It was not simply an arid constitutional debate, for the problem was a very real one. Substantial quantities of liquor were being imported by Saskatchewan residents, chiefly from Winnipeg, and a number of so-called "export houses" had been established in Saskatchewan to supply thirsty customers in the adjoining provinces by mail order.[172] The government was well aware of the seriousness of the situation, and later in the session the Attorney-General did introduce a bill outlawing the activities of those companies which had been established in the province solely for the purpose of exporting intoxicating liquor. Though it did not interfere with the activities of brewers and distillers licensed by the federal government, the bill was made separate from the Saskatchewan Temperance Act because, as Turgeon readily admitted, the government had doubts about its legality.[173] It passed without much discussion,[174] but the government's fears proved to be well-founded. A few months later the Saskatchewan Supreme Court ruled that the measure interfered with interprovincial trade, a matter of federal jurisdiction, and was therefore unconstitutional.[175]

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[170] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 7 Geo. V, Chapter 23.

[171] *Leader*, 13 February 1917, 28 February 1917, 10 March 1917.

[172] E. J. Chambers, "The Use of the Plebiscite and Referendum in Saskatchewan" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1965), pp. 122-23.

For Saskatchewan farmers the most important measure of the session was a new agricultural credit bill. It was indicative of the relationship that existed between the government of the day and the organized farmers that the Provincial Treasurer appeared before the annual Grain Growers' convention in Moose Jaw to outline the terms of the legislation before it was actually introduced in the House. Dunning explained to the delegates that the government proposed to create a Saskatchewan Farm Loan Board, consisting of a salaried commissioner, who was to be the managing member of the Board, and two other members. The Board would be responsible to the whole Legislature, rather than to the cabinet, to make it immune to political interference. Loans would be made to farmers for productive purposes only, repayable over a period of thirty years in equal annual instalments of principal and interest. Money would be supplied to the Board by the Provincial Treasurer, taking as security the mortgages given by the borrowers. The interest charged to the farmers would be no higher than was necessary to cover the cost to the government of obtaining the money and administering the scheme. Dunning concluded by informing the delegates that no applications for loans would be accepted until after the next election, to avoid accusations that the Farm Loan Board was being used as a vote-getting device.[176]

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[173] *Leader*, 9 March 1917.

[174] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 7 Geo. V, Chapter 24.

[175] *Leader*, 16 July 1917.

The farm loan legislation was introduced in the House and explained to the members by Premier Martin the following week. In its details it differed markedly from the bill which the Legislature had approved before the war, a point emphasized by the Leader of the Opposition when he spoke on the proposed measure. Willoughby twitted Dunning for supporting an agricultural credit scheme involving direct government loans to farmers in preference to the co-operative credit banks which the Agricultural Credit Commission had recommended in 1913, and reminded the House that the Conservatives had all along favoured the plan which the government had now seen fit to adopt. In reply the Provincial Treasurer readily admitted that he had changed his mind. Financial conditions had changed appreciably since

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[176] *Ibid.*, 15 February 1917.

1913, and the new legislation would be more suitable in the light of these changed conditions. No one could deny the need for long-term agricultural credit, particularly after the war, when, as he saw it, low wheat prices would result in a trend away from straight grain growing on the prairies. It was the government's hope that ready access to "cheap money" through the Farm Loan Board would help to encourage further agricultural diversification in the province and lessen Saskatchewan's dependence on a single crop.[177] The bill was not treated as a controversial matter, and with little further discussion "An Act to Provide for Loans to Agriculturalists upon the Security of Farm Mortgages" was passed into law.[178]

Among the other measures approved during this fourth war-time session of the Saskatchewan Legislature was a bill amalgamating the co-operative creameries which the Department of Agriculture had managed since 1906. The new concern, to be known as the Saskatchewan Co-operative Creameries Limited, was modelled on that other successful partnership of public and private enterprise, the Co-operative Elevator Company, with the government advancing up to 75 per cent of the cost of acquiring, constructing or remodelling creameries, cheese factories or cold storage plants.[179] The Board of Highway Commissioners was abolished, and a Department of

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[177] *Ibid.*, 20 February 1917.

[178] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 7 Geo. V, Chapter 25.

[179] *Ibid.*, Chapter 26.

Highways, under J. A. Calder, was created in its place.[180] Departmental accounting procedures were completely overhauled, as the chartered accounting firm of Price, Waterhouse and Company had recommended in a survey conducted for the government in December.[181] Finally, a Returned Soldiers' Employment Commission was established to make a survey of all possible sources of employment in the province and assist war veterans in finding jobs.[182]

The House completed the final business of the session on 10 March. There was the traditional "paper battle" that had for years followed the departure of the Lieutenant-Governor from the chamber, as "... the members of the house displayed their joy at the cessation of work, papers and books being thrown at each other from both sides of the house."[183] Though the Legislature would not be dissolved and the writs issued until 2 June, the Liberals and Conservatives at once began to prepare for the election that both knew was not now far off.[184]

As in the three previous provincial contests, the initial advantage again lay with the Liberals. Their political machine was in good working order and the Conservatives, who one party supporter frankly admitted were "stone broke,"[185] had no comparable organization to match it. The inner workings of the political organization which J. A. Calder had meticulously put together in Saskatchewan remain shrouded in mystery even now, after the passage of nearly sixty years. This much is clear, though: whatever success the "Calder machine" enjoyed in Saskatchewan was due in large measure to the Liberals' uninterrupted control of the machinery of government and the patronage which that government could distribute. Since 1905 the various departments of the provincial civil service had been staffed with sound Liberals who, in addition to their normal duties, provided the party with a vast intelligence gathering network between elections and an army of election workers once the writs were issued.[186] Patronage was unblushingly employed to reward the faithful and woo the uncommitted; no Tory could expect to receive a government contract or a government job as long as the Liberals remained in office.

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[180] *Ibid.*, Chapter 7.

[181] *Ibid.*, Chapter 6; *Leader*, 5 December 1916.

[182] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 7 Geo. V, Chapter 30.

[183] *Leader*, 12 March 1917.

[184] *Daily Post*, 13 March 1917; *Leader*, 15 March 1917.

Not only were the Liberals better organized than their opponents, they also possessed a sound party newspaper in most major centres in the province. Newspaper publishing was an expensive proposition in Saskatchewan, and business failures were not uncommon. The way was made easier for the Regina *Leader*, the

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[185] PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, W. G. Cates to Willison, 24 May 1917, p. 5112.

[186] See, for example, AS, W. M. Martin Papers, J. P. Paget to Martin, 24 March 1917, p. 24193; W. B. Cumming to Martin, 23 April 1917, p. 9619; Dr. Hugh MacLean Papers, unpublished autobiography, pp. 31-33.

Saskatoon *Phoenix,* the Moose Jaw *Times* and other Liberal journals because the government departments in Regina were expected to award all advertising and printing work to "reliable" newspapers. Loyal editors jealously guarded their privileged position, and were quick to protest if a rival received favourable treatment.[187] Since 1911, of course, the Conservatives had had control of federal patronage, but Conservative newspapers in Saskatchewan do not appear to have been favoured with a great deal of government work.[188]

Until the outbreak of the war both major parties had been fairly evenly matched in terms of newspaper support, but the pressure of competition and increased costs of publication gradually began to force the weaker newspapers from the field. One of the first to succumb was the Conservative paper in Regina. By 1916 the *Evening Province* was nearly bankrupt, and in October of that year it was sold to W. F. Herman, a Nova Scotia-born newspaperman who had earlier acquired the Conservative paper in Saskatoon. The Regina paper he renamed the *Daily Post,* and for a time it continued to support the Conservative party as its predecessor had done. Then, on 17 March 1917, the two Herman newspapers declared their political independence. The papers offered no explanation at the time for their sudden desertion of the Conservative party. It seems likely that business considerations figured prominently in the decision, with W. F. Herman dissociating the *Daily Post* and *Daily Star* from an increasingly unpopular federal Conservative administration to ensure the financial success of his newspaper chain.[189] The defection of the Conservative newspapers in Saskatchewan's two largest cities dealt a serious blow to the party's fortunes, coming as it did on the eve of a provincial election.[190] Hard on the heels of this setback came another, in J. E. Bradshaw's own riding. On 31 May the Prince Albert *Herald* announced its conversion to the Liberal cause and launched a vigorous campaign for the return of a solid Liberal contingent from northern Saskatchewan.[191]

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[187] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, T. Robertson to Turgeon, 13 November 1912; D. Lawrence to Turgeon, 15 June 1913.

[188] PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, W. G. Cates to Willison, 29 March 1915, pp. 5098-99.

The highlight of Liberal preparations for the election was a large and enthusiastic provincial convention in Moose Jaw, the first the party had held since 1905. There were 600 delegates in attendance from fifty-one of the fifty-nine provincial constituencies. The two-day gathering was, according to one of its organizers, "a success in every way."[192] Mindful of the political power of the province's newly-enfranchised women, the delegates elected a woman as vice-chairman of the convention, and named women to half the places on the resolutions committee. The result of their labours was a progressive platform containing pledges to introduce a system of pensions for needy mothers, legislation to regulate the hours of work and set the minimum wages of all female employees in the province and measures to assist returned soldiers in re-establishing themselves in civilian life after the war. Vacant lands owned by speculators would be purchased by the provincial government and sold to *bona fide* settlers on generous terms, and the construction of railway branch lines would be encouraged by means of bond guarantees or undertaken by the government itself.

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[189] J. W. Brennan, "Press and Party in Saskatchewan, 1914-1929," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXVII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1974), pp. 82-83.

[190] PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, W. G. Cates to Willison, 2 April 1917, p. 5103.

[191] Abrams, pp. 224-25.

[192] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. A. Calder to Laurier, 14 April 1917, p. 195257.

On the politically sensitive question of education the platform simply stated that the government would enforce the School Act so as to ensure "that ... every child obtains a thorough knowledge of the English language." In a hard-hitting speech to the convention Premier Martin declared that any man who attempted to raise religious discord or racial questions at this critical time in the war was "not a true friend of Saskatchewan, Canada, or the British Empire" and maintained that the existing law would in the end create a condition of affairs where everyone properly understood the English language. The convention did not restrict itself solely to a discussion of provincial issues. It also gave unanimous approval to what was termed a "Saskatchewan Bill of Rights," which demanded that Ottawa remove or reduce the tariff on a wide range of articles, complete the as yet unfinished railway to Hudson Bay and transfer all lands and natural resourses in

Saskatchewan to provincial control.[193]

The Conservatives had drawn up an official party platform at their annual convention in January 1917, and in April the forty-odd candidates then in the field met in Regina to add the finishing touches. In final form it differed little from the platform which the Liberals had adopted. There were pledges to introduce mothers' pensions and improve working conditions for women, assist returned soldiers and provide long term government loans to encourage agricultural development. As well, the Conservatives promised to transfer all road work to the municipalities, introduce complete provincial prohibition and the initiative, referendum and recall, and institute a thorough reform of the civil service to remove abuses.[194] It was an attractive programme in many respects, but it was largely ignored by Conservative speakers as the campaign progressed. W. B. Willoughby and his colleagues chose instead to concentrate on the three issues which they were confident would bring down the government: schools, scandals and soldier's votes.

On the first of these contentious issues, the official Conservative stand was actually quite moderate. The platform simply declared that a Conservative government would make such changes in the School Act and in the regulations as would "provide in every school in Saskatchewan, whether public or separate, private or parochial, adequate and efficient instruction in reading, writing, and speaking the English language...."[195] This apparently did not satisfy some Conservatives, who wished to see the party take a harder line. At the Regina convention which nominated Brigadier-General J. F. L. Embury to oppose Premier Martin, a strongly worded resolution was passed declaring that the most important issue facing the voters in the coming election was the question of "race assimilation," and that the use of all languages other than English should be prohibited entirely in the first six grades of every public, separate and private school in the province.[196] Advertisements like the one in the 16 June issue of the *Regina Daily Post* castigated the government's lax enforcement of the school law, and urged electors to "Vote for the Opposition Candidate and Banish the Monster of Polylingualism from Saskatchewan Forever."[197] Conservative rallies heard the same call, embellished with charges that in some districts school exercises began with the singing of the Austrian national anthem, and that the government had condoned such outrages because it did not wish to offend the "foreigners" on whom electoral success depended.[198]

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[193] *Leader*, 29-30 March 1917.

[194] *Daily Post*, 18 January 1917, 26-27 April 1917.

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[195] *Ibid.*, 27 April 1917.

[196] *Ibid.*, 9 May 1917.

[197] *Ibid.*, 16 June 1917.

[198] *Lloydminster Times*, 7 June 1917; *Weekly Courier* (Riverhurst), 7 June 1917; *Daily Post*, 12 June 1917, 21 June 1917.

In their offensive against the teaching of "foreign" languages in Saskatchewan schools the Conservatives were joined by two other groups, the National British Citizenship League and the Orange Lodge. The League had first appeared in Moose Jaw in March 1917, and soon spread to other cities across the province. Its motto was "One Flag, One School, One Tongue," and its purpose, according to one of its organizers, was "to inculcate loyalty to the British Empire and British institutions [and] to protect British rights against encroachment by aggressive aliens...." During the campaign the League added its voice to the cry for an end to foreign language instruction in the schools.[199] The Orange Lodge went farther, and submitted a questionnaire to candidates asking whether they favoured non-sectarian public schools, the abolition of bilingual teaching, and the enactment of a law requiring that all trustees be able to read and write English. If the candidate answered in the affirmative, the Lodge would regard him as a "suitable person" to represent the constituency.[200]

The now famous "Bradshaw charges" also figured prominently in the Conservatives' campaign in 1917.[201] They continued to insist that only the surface had been touched by the royal commissions, and that much more would be revealed once their opponents had been driven from office.[202] Government waste and extravagance, that staple of any Opposition campaign, also found its way into Conservative speeches.[203] Inefficiency and corruption had brought about the downfall of the Russian autocracy, one Conservative told an audience at Qu'Appelle, and the "Saskatchewan autocracy" was about to meet the same fate.[204]

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[199] *Daily Post,* 28 March 1917, 26 April 1917.

[200] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, Kitchener L.O.L. No. 2671 to Turgeon, n.d.; *Lloydminster Times,* 21 June 1917.

[201] *The Big Steal: How the Money of the People Was Wasted to the Profit of Favorite Contractors in the Building of the Battleford Asylum* (Moose Jaw: News Publishing Company, 1917?); *Cleared? What Have the Royal Commissions Revealed? Bradshaw has been Vindicated* (n.p., 1917?); *How Liberal Members of the*

The Soldiers' Representation Act, which had been the target of much bitter criticism during the recent session of the Legislature, was soundly condemned by Conservatives during the campaign as "the worst piece of legislation that had ever gone through a Canadian provincial parliament," "grossly unpatriotic" and "an injustice to the men who had made great sacrifices in the cause of the Empire." It was widely argued that the Martin government had disfranchised the soldiers in their home ridings because it knew they did not approve of its policy of pandering to the "so-called naturalized

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Saskatchewan Legislature were Bought. Shameless Representatives of People Sold Themselves for a Few Hundred Dollars to Thwart the Popular Will. The Old Gang Still Controls (Moose Jaw: News Publishing Company, 1917?); *Phantom Roads. Fake Contracts. False Pay Rolls. Some Facts in the Story of the Looting of the Public Treasury Through the Highways Department* (n.p., 1917?).

[202] *Daily Post*, 31 March 1917, 3 May 1917.

[203] *Sun* (Swift Current), 3 April 1917; *Daily Post*, 12 June 1917.

[204] *Daily Post*, 24 March 1917.

Canadian citizens," and were only waiting for the opportunity to drive the Liberals from office.[205] It was easy enough for Willoughby and the Conservatives to wrap themselves in the Union Jack and accuse the government of disloyalty, though there was some justice in their argument that the 27,000 Saskatchewan soldiers then on active service overseas deserved more than the three seats allotted to them.

Taken as a whole, it was largely a negative campaign, a campaign with few constructive proposals for the future development of the province. One of the chronic weaknesses of the Conservative party in the past had been its inability to advance a programme that would be sufficiently attractive to the voter to counteract the government's not inconsiderable legislative accomplishments, most of which Haultain or Willoughby had accepted in principle and criticized only in detail. Their 1917 campaign demonstrated that it remained the greatest obstacle to the victory at the polls that had eluded the Conservatives for so long in Saskatchewan.

The achievements of nearly twelve years of Liberal rule formed the cornerstone of the government's campaign in 1917. Premier Martin pointed to the creation of a provincial telephone system and a university and agricultural college, the encouragement of Saskatchewan's foremost industry through the Co-operative Elevator Company and the hail insurance and farm credit schemes, the abolition of the bar and the extension of the franchise to women, and urged voters not to be "... misled by the appeals to racial and religious prejudice and the campaign of vilification and slander which is being conducted by representatives of the Conservative party."[206] To Conservative charges of waste and extravagence the Liberals replied that Saskatchewan had the lowest per capita public debt of any western province.[207] The Liberals had indeed given the province sound and, on the whole, efficient administration, a point emphasized by the two Herman newspapers when they called for the return of the Martin government in special two-page editorials late in the campaign. "On the ground of experience, the calibre of the men composing it, its progressiveness and its attitude of solicitation for the interests of the farmers," the *Daily Post* and *Daily Star* declared on 16 June, "it is entitled to another term of office."[208]

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[205] *Esterhazy Observer*, 19 April 1917; *Daily Post*, 9 May 1917, 21 June 1917.

The election of 1917 also marked the emergence into Saskatchewan politics of a new party, the Nonpartisan League. The League had originated in North Dakota, where it captured the state legislature in 1916, and soon spread across the border into Canada. Its platform was avowedly socialistic, calling for public ownership of all public utilities, and it appealed to farmers as a class to take the reins of government into their own hands. The Nonpartisan League had first appeared in Saskatchewan in the summer of 1916, at a time when prairie farmers were showing an increasing impatience with both of the old parties. Independent political action had become a frequent topic of discussion in the pages of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, and the Canadian Council of Agriculture was about to issue a ringing declaration of the political programme of the organized farmers with the publication of the "Farmers' Platform."[209] Led by S. E. Haight, a farmer from the Swift Current district who had worked briefly with the League in North Dakota, the new party had spread rapidly through southwestern Saskatchewan. A weekly newspaper, the *Nonpartisan Leader*, began publication in October 1916, and by February 1917 League membership had reached 2,000.[210]

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[206] *Leader*, 4 June 1917.

[207] *Weekly Courier* (Riverhurst), 31 May 1917; *Humboldt Journal*, 7 June 1917; *Leader*, 18 June 1917.

[208] *Daily Post*, 16 June 1917; *Saskatoon Star*, 16 June 1917.

The Saskatchewan branch of the League employed the same methods that had proven so successful south of the border. Organizers in Ford touring cars, still something of a novelty on Saskatchewan's primitive rural roads, sold memberships at $15.00 per head, accepting post-dated cheques where farmers did not have the ready cash. When the roads became impassable the League organizers moved indoors and held their meetings in country schoolhouses. With a platform which called for government ownership of all terminal elevators, flour mills, stock yards and packing plants in the province, the adoption of the initiative, referendum and recall, and the creation of rural credit banks operated at cost, the Saskatchewan Nonpartisans hoped to emulate the success of their North Dakota brethren at the next provincial election. Once in office they proposed to borrow $1,000,000 on the credit of the province, using part of this sum to finance the various government-owned enterprises included in the League's programme, and the balance to purchase agricultural machinery at cost for farmers.[211]

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[209] Sharp, *Agrarian Revolt*, pp. 77-89, W. L. Morton, *Progressive Party*, pp. 40-46.

[210] *Daily Post*, 23 October 1916; Sharp, *Agrarian Revolt*, p. 78. Membership figures were often wildly exaggerated in the newspapers. In December 1916, for instance, the *Regina Daily Post* carried a report that League membership then numbered in the "tens of thousands". (*Daily Post*, 8 December 1916.)

Many of the new members recruited by the League were also members of the S.G.G.A., and the question of endorsing the League as the political wing of the organized farmers was raised at the Association's annual convention in February 1917. The Grain Growers unanimously endorsed the "Farmers' Platform," leaving it to the Board of Directors to take whatever steps were necessary to give effect to it. There was still no question of the S.G.G.A. entering politics as an association, though, and when a motion endorsing the Nonpartisan League was put to a vote it was defeated by a majority of ten to one.[212] The League thereupon launched a vituperative campaign of abuse against the S.G.G.A., condemning it as nothing more than a Liberal organization, ruled and dominated by the Liberal party.[213] Liberal supporters in areas of the province where the League was strong did not take the new party lightly.[214] By appealing to farmers as a class to elect a "farmers' government" the League threatened one of the Liberals' traditional bases of support in Saskatchewan, and the one most essential to continued electoral success.

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[211] QUA, N. P. Lambert Papers, "Report Respecting Investigation of Non-Partisan League, Swift Current," n.d.; *Guide*, 5 September 1917.

[212] *Guide*, 21 February 1917; AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Minutes of the Sixteenth Annual Convention of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association* [hereafter cited as *Convention Minutes*], pp. 45-48, 58-59.

Though the Nonpartisan League had been organizing the province for almost a year before the writs were issued, it managed to put only eight candidates in the field. All were farmers except one, Boa Z. Haight, vice president of the W.G.G.A. and the only woman to contest the 1917 election. The nominating conventions were enthusiastic, but the League could not match the formidable organization of the Liberals, who redoubled their efforts in the ridings where the new party had put a candidate in the field.[215] In their country meetings the Liberals laid great stress on the fact that theirs had been a "farmers' government" in all but name,[216] as indeed it had with such prominent Grain Growers as Motherwell, Langley and Dunning sitting in the cabinet.

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[213] Sharp, *Agrarian Revolt*, pp. 89-90.

[214] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. A. Yager to C. M. Goddard, 26 February 1917, p. 194953; AS, W. M. Martin Papers, J. Erickson to Martin, 14 May 1917, pp. 24261-63.

[215] AS, Mrs. S. V. Haight Papers, D. A. Mumby to Haight, 12 June 1917; Sharp, *Agrarian Revolt*, pp. 91-92.

[216] *Sun* (Swift Current), 6 April 1917, 10 April 1917; *Leader*, 5 June 1917; *Humboldt Journal*, 7 June 1917.

Both major parties approached the day of polling confident of victory. "All reports are to the effect that if the foreigners are not solid with the Government, we win ...." was W. J. Gallon's estimate on 10 June, and two days later J. A. Calder predicted a "complete and smashing victory" for the Liberals.[217] Calder's proved to be the more accurate prediction, for on 26 June the Martin government was returned to office with fifty-one seats. The Conservatives took seven and the Nonpartisan League one. With women casting ballots in a provincial election for the first time, there was a dramatic increase in the popular vote, from 87,632 in 1912 to 187,635 in 1917. Of this the Liberals polled 56.6 per cent and the Conservatives only 36.3 per cent. The remaining 7.1 per cent was divided among 19 Nonpartisan, Independent and Labour candidates. Nearly half the Liberals, including Premier Martin, George Langley, W. F. A. Turgeon, C. A. Dunning and J. A. Calder, won by 700 votes or more, and sixteen had majorities of 1,000 or more. No Conservative had a majority that was even this large, the closest being Donald Maclean, the Saskatoon lawyer who won that seat from the government by 697 votes, and four of the seven successful Conservative candidates won by less than 300 votes.[218]

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[217] AS, J. E. Bradshaw Papers, W. J. Gallon to Bradshaw, 10 June 1917; *Leader*, 12 June 1917.

[218] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 91-158; Eager, "Government of

In its first test at the polls the Nonpartisan League had managed to win only one seat, Swift Current, where its candidate had actually received the blessing of all three parties. It placed second in five others,[219] but the new party had clearly failed to emulate the success of the North Dakota League. The campaign of abuse directed against the S.G.G.A. doubtless offended farmers who might otherwise have supported the League, and its organization was no match for that of the Liberals. Its poor showing at the polls led to an unseemly public display of bitter recriminations and internal feuding which hastened the demise of the Saskatchewan branch of the Nonpartisan League. At the party's annual convention in Swift Current in July there were angry charges of disloyalty and a purge of members who had been critical of S. E. Haight and the League executive. In the end the convention agreed to elect a new executive and redraft the League constitution, but by this time the damage was irreparable. The League was in desperate financial straits

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Saskatchewan," p. 344. The voting for the three soldiers' representatives did not take place until later in the fall. John A. Reid, Agent-General for Alberta in London was appointed returning officer. (AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to Lieut. W. J. Patterson, 30 June 1917, p. 9645.) There were no official party candidates; a total of five candidates were nominated in Great Britain and nine in France and Belgium. The balloting took place between 3 October and 13 October 1917. The three soldiers' representatives elected were Lieutenant-Colonel J. A. Cross and Captain F. B. Bagshaw, both Regina lawyers, and Private Harris Turner, a Saskatoon newspaperman who had been blinded in 1916. (*Legislative Directory*, p. 159.)

[219] *Sun* (Swift Current), 6 April 1917. The ridings in which the Nonpartisan League candidate finished second were Turtleford, Notukeu, Happyland, Morse and Last Mountain.

and D. J. Sykes, its sole elected representative, resigned from the party to sit as a Liberal.[220]

For the Conservatives, the 1917 provincial election was an unparalleled disaster. Not only did W. B. Willoughby fail to unseat the government, he barely managed to maintain his party's numerical strength in the House. Three of his ablest colleagues were defeated: F. C. Tate in Lumsden, D. J. Wylie in Maple Creek and, to the Liberals' great delight, J. E. Bradshaw in Prince Albert.[221] They had carried much of the load in debate and in committee, and the party could ill afford the loss of three such experienced M.L.A.'s. Apart from Willoughby, who was himself shortly to resign as party leader to accept a senatorship, only one other Conservative elected in 1917 -- Joseph Glenn -- had any previous legislative experience.[222] Various reasons were offered by the Conservatives in explanation of the outcome, including the disfranchisement of the soldiers in their home ridings, the influence of the Roman Catholic Church in the "foreign" settlements, the defection of three of the four Conservative daily newspapers in the province before the election, the work of the "Calder machine" and the introduction of the conscription issue.[223] Of these, W. B. Willoughby considered the last to have been most critical:

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[220] *Guide,* 5 September 1917; *Leader,* 16 November 1917.

[221] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, T. H. McGuire to Turgeon, 30 June 1917.

[222] *C.P.G.,* 1918, pp. 473-90.

> The final cause of our shipwreck was conscription. In many churches on Sunday the priests openly said a conservative vote was a vote for conscription. The vast majority of priests in Saskatchewan are French or German speaking.
>
> The neutral nations [*sic*] subjects such as Scandinavians, friendly to us in the last week landslided, also a lot of Americans. It is true we obtained some votes on conscription but not one for 20 we lost. Three weeks ago our prospects were of the very best and I know as I toured the province 3 months.[224]

It is difficult to determine whether conscription, which was soon to be the central issue of a federal election, really played any very large part in the provincial contest, though there is little doubt that Saskatchewan residents held strong views on the subject. As one Gull Lake woman whose husband had enlisted put it in a letter to Prime Minister Borden:

> Why should I have to take everybodys [*sic*] slams and slurs just because he went of his own free will and done what those cowards are afraid to do the Empire is just as much to one man as it is to another .... Why not make everyone available go and do their bit and there would not be half the hard feelings in the country as it is now the men that do go are put down as fools by the ones remaining behind ....[225]

Not all agreed with this sentiment, of course:

> ... conscription is all right for towns where you can

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[223] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, R. Rogers to Borden, 12 July 1917, pp. 123131-34.

[224] *Ibid.*, W. B. Willoughby to Borden, 29 June 1917, p. 123105.

[225] *Ibid.*, unsigned letter to Borden, n.d., pp. 116011-12.

> get the superfluous quantity of bank clerks, insurance men, clergymen, etc. but dont [*sic*] take the backbone of the country [farmers' sons], because if you do it mean [*sic*] millions of bushels decrease in crop, besides spelling ruination to the farmers.[226]

In some ridings the Conservatives apparently distributed literature claiming that every vote cast for the Liberals was a vote against conscription.[227] In others the Liberals raised the spectre of conscription with the result that, as one Conservative put it, "... the foreigners went absolutely solid for the return of the ... government."[228]

Again, as in previous contests in Saskatchewan, the Conservatives failed to win any significant support among those whose mother tongue was not English, and some were quick to blame the unscrupulous tactics of the Liberals:

> At all the polls where the foreign born voted were Interpreters who were rather overzealous in their masters' cause. As we could not understand the language we were at a great disadvantage. At my own Poll I caught him several times placing his thumb where they should make their mark. Some of them were so anxious to show how they voted, that they opened the ballot to show the mark before depositing it.[229]

In fact, it was the Conservatives themselves who were to blame for the party's poor showing in 1917. W. B. Willoughby and his colleagues had attempted to capitalize on the fears and suspicions engendered by the war in the hope that English-speaking Protestants would desert the Liberal party and vote *en masse* for the Conservatives. These tactics simply had not worked. The Conservative campaign of "English only" alienated the foreign-born, the open and active support of the Orange Lodge estranged Catholcs and Willoughby was not able to convince the majority of Ontario and British-born voters that it was time for a change of government.

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[226] *Ibid.*, T. J. Harrison to Borden, 5 February 1916, p. 115981.

[227] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Rev. B. Doerfler to Turgeon, 30 June 1917.

[228] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, T. McNaughton to Borden, 5 July 1917, pp. 40533-34.

[229] *Ibid.*, D. M. McKellar to Borden, 4 July 1917, p. 123113.

In the wake of its disastrous showing at the polls, the Conservative party proceeded to cast about for a new leader. W. B. Willoughby was appointed to the Senate in October 1917, and in November a party caucus chose Donald Maclean to succeed him as leader. Like Willoughby, he was a lawyer, and had been practicing in Saskatoon since 1909. He had little political experience, having run unsuccessfully once in Saskatoon in 1911 before winning the provincial seat in 1917, but he was, from all appearances, an effective speaker. Moreover, Maclean did have the distinction of polling the largest majority of any successful Conservative candidate in that election.[230] He faced the unenviable task of rebuilding a party which had just been emphatically rejected by Saskatchewan voters. Before the war, the Conservative party had been able to attract the votes, not only of "true blue" Tories, but of all those who for any reason were opposed to the government. In

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[230] *Daily Post*, 24 October 1917, 17 November 1917.

1917, with Nonpartisan, Independent or Labour candidates contesting many ridings, these voters had not cast their ballots for Conservatives, and the Conservative share of the popular vote dropped to an all-time low. It was significant that in most ridings where a Nonpartisan candidate had been put in the field, the Conservatives had come a distant third. It was an ominous sign that did not bode well for the future of Saskatchewan Conservatism. Provincial Conservatives were also seriously handicapped by the growing unpopularity of the Borden government among western farmers. Unless Donald Maclean could somehow dissociate himself from his unpopular Ottawa colleagues, and win back those independent-minded voters who had deserted the Conservatives in 1917, the party would continue its slow descent into political oblivion.

If all was gloom and recrimination among Conservatives in the light of the 1917 election returns, the Liberals were bubbling over with undisguised pleasure. The government had, in its fourth test at the polls, again been returned, this time with a larger majority than on any previous occasion. Premier Martin was naturally gratified with the outcome,[231] as well he might be, for he had proven himself a capable successor to Walter Scott. J. A. Calder, too, had reason to be pleased. He had won personal re-election in Saltcoats by the largest majority of his career, and one of the largest of any Liberal in the province; "... not bad for a villain," he remarked to Laurier.[232] Calder's whole course in refusing the premiership and insisting instead that it go to Martin had been vindicated. The Liberal ship had weathered the stormy seas of the past eighteen months and, with its barnacles cleaned away, was now sailing again in calmer waters.

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[231] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to Capt. R. B. Martin, 28 June 1917, p. 24334; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. M. Martin to Laurier, 30 June 1917, p. 196191.

Little more was heard of the Bradshaw charges. In its final report to the government, which was made public in July 1917, the Wetmore Commission concluded that it could find no evidence to show that any of the money realized from the road frauds had been used for party or election purposes. It reported also that the government had had no knowledge of any irregularities in the awarding of the contract for the Saskatoon bridge and that, notwithstanding these irregularities, the province had received good value for the money expended in its construction.[233] The findings of the Wetmore Commission were accepted without a murmur by the Opposition when the report was tabled in the Legislature later in the fall. During the same session, the House unanimously agreed to discharge the Haultain Commission, whose inquiry into the graft charges had already cost nearly $50,000 without a report of any kind having been produced, and refer any matters requiring further investigation to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Printing.[234] This final chapter in the political scandal that had once threatened to drive the Liberals from office in disgrace passed almost unnoticed in the province. Public attention was riveted on Ottawa during the late summer and fall of 1917, as Prime Minister Borden attempted to form a coalition ministry that would implement the Military Service Act.

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[232] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. A. Calder to Laurier, 27 June 1917, p. 196158.

[233] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Second Session 1917, No. 8, *Final Report of the Wetmore Royal Commission.* J. P. Brown had kept most of the money for himself, using some of it to speculate in real estate, and to build an expensive house in Regina. He had also been surreptitiously doing road work for the Board of Highway Commissioners, and some of the money he had stolen had been used to purchase horses and earthmoving equipment. As well, the Commission noted, there was evidence to suggest that Brown had been having "... intrigues with women, which would likely account for a very considerable expenditure." (*Ibid.*, pp. 34-35).

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[234] *Journals*, Second Session 1917, pp. 24, 76-77; *Leader*, 7 December 1917.

CHAPTER VI

TIME OF TROUBLES: THE END OF THE WAR AND AFTER

It was scarcely to be expected that Saskatchewan could or would remain aloof from the swirling controversy in Parliament over conscription and coalition. The first of these two contentious issues had already found its way into a provincial election campaign, and one of Saskatchewan's most powerful political figures was soon to play a prominent part in the negotiations that culminated in the formation of the Union Government. Conscription and coalition drove a wedge into the Saskatchewan Liberal party. The federal election of 17 December 1917 widened the breach and left other strains in the fragile fabric of Saskatchewan society. Three years of war had already heated the "melting pot" to a boiling point and the Anglo-Protestant majority, their faith in the formulas for assimilation severely shaken, stirred it with ever greater vigour. Their efforts to ensure the primacy of the English language in Saskatchewan classrooms by legislative fiat had so far been resisted by the Martin government, but the "language question" did not die. Indeed it was given new life in the winter of 1917, for the passions let loose by the bitter contest between Laurier and Borden created an unprecedented demand for unity and conformity in Saskatchewan. From all corners of the province came renewed appeals to the Martin government to eliminate "foreign" languages from the schools, appeals which the Premier at length decided he could no longer safely ignore. As 1917 gave way to 1918 Saskatchewan's labour force also began to show new signs of restiveness, and a willingness to resort to the strike weapon more often than it ever had before. Though a war-weary province was to greet the Armistice of 11 November 1918 with relief and rejoicing, the return of peace did not quickly heal these ethnic and class divisions within Saskatchewan society or restore tranquility to the political life of the province.

It was the Liberals, of course, who had been the first to call for a coalition, months before the manpower situation on the Western Front reached crisis proportions. Throughout the latter part of 1916 and with growing intensity in 1917 certain elements in the Liberal party -- notably J. W. Dafoe and his *Manitoba Free Press* -- had been demanding that a national bipartisan government be formed to run the country until the war was won. Among the public at large there was also substantial support for the idea that the nation's resources could not be most effectively mobilized until political differences had been cast aside and a nonpartisan government established that could give its full attention to the prosecution of the war.[1] With this sentiment Saskatchewan's leading Liberal newspaper was in general agreement.[2] So too was J. A. Calder, who, before the year was out, would leave provincial politics, and the party to which he had given his allegiance since entering public life, to join Borden at Ottawa. Calder explained his views in a lengthy letter to Laurier early in 1917:

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[1] R. Cook, *The Politics of John W. Dafoe and the Free Press* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), pp. 73-75; R. Graham, *Arthur Meighen*, Vol. I: *The Door of Opportunity* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company, 1960), p. 118.

[2] *Leader*, 15 December 1916.

> In the first place there is no doubt about the wide spread dissatisfaction that exists regarding the woeful incompetence of Borden and his Cabinet. Evidence of this is to be found everywhere. He has been weighed in the balance and found wanting. He has long ago ceased to be the national leader in this crisis. The people put up with him - but they are waiting anxiously for an opportunity to put someone in his place.
>
> On the other hand - and I must be perfectly frank - there is a serious doubt in the public mind as to the advisability of placing you in charge of the nations [*sic*] affairs in this crisis ...
>
> To put the whole situation in a nut shell the people throughout the length and breadth of Canada are growing weary of governments and politics as they existed in the past. They are waiting for some strong leader to advocate a business administration in the federal field. The war is getting on people's nerves. We have had nothing but muddling. We need a strong central authority that will set about a thorough house cleaning and get action along sane sound lines.

Calder suggested that Laurier take the initiatve in proposing the formation of such a "business administration" to carry the nation through the war period, a move which he believed would "at once appeal to the imagination and the good sense of thousands upon thousands of our citizens who have more at stake in the war than the game of party politics."[3]

As it turned out, it was the Prime Minister, not Laurier, who took the lead in proposing the formation of a coalition government. He met with the Liberal leader on 25 May, explained the terms of the new manpower bill which the cabinet had approved in draft form only the day before, and offered the Liberals half the places in a reconstructed ministry, not counting the office of Prime Minister. Three more meetings took place, but on 6 June Laurier informed Borden that he could not come in.[4] Laurier's refusal did not mark the end of Borden's efforts to form a coalition. He had already received intimations that some of Laurier's parliamentary colleagues would be willing to enter the government whether their leader did so or not. As the weeks passed there were hopeful signs that some leading Liberals from Ontario and the west might be prepared to join as well.[5]

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[3] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, J. A. Calder to Laurier, 16 January 1917, pp. 194533-40.

J. A. Calder was one of a group of four western Liberals -- the others were Premier A. L. Sifton of Alberta, T. A. Crerar of the Grain Growers' Grain Company and the Manitoba Attorney-General, A. B. Hudson -- who were widely and repeatedly touted as possible members of a reconstructed federal government during the months that followed. They were all attractive men, though Calder's presence in a coalition ministry was viewed with misgivings by some Conservatives on account of his reputation as a "slick and unscrupulous partisan."[6]

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[4] H. Borden, ed., *Robert Laird Borden: His Memoirs*, Vol. II: *1916-1920* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1938), pp. 720-27; Skelton, Vol. II, pp. 506-13.

[5] Borden, Vol. II, pp. 728-41; Graham, Vol. I, p. 125.

Among western Liberals sentiment in favour of both conscription and coalition was strong and widespread, but to form a union with them proved to be no easy matter. The Liberal Premiers of the three prairie provinces, Norris of Manitoba, Martin of Saskatchewan and Sifton of Alberta, all favoured coalition but were inclined to delay it until after a federal election. They hoped that the increasingly independent western wing of the Liberal party would in this way be able to preserve its organization and following intact and negotiate with Borden about the formation of a coalition government on equal terms. They feared losing some support if the party entered a conscriptionist government before a general election, for prairie farmers had reservations about compulsory military service.[7] There were other Liberals in the west who were bitterly opposed to union with the Conservatives under any circumstances. They looked for leadership to Frank Oliver, whose Edmonton *Bulletin* lost no opportunity to denounce coalition. Oliver was supported in his stand by some members of the Alberta government, and by some Liberals in Saskatchewan.[8] Understandably, then, Calder and the others hesitated to commit themselves until the feelings of their followers had been expressed at a convention of the western wing of the Liberal party which had been arranged for early August in Winnipeg. Prairie Liberals showed a new sensitivity about making up their own minds, and objected to interference in their discussions by outsiders such as Clifford Sifton, who made a speaking tour of Manitoba and Saskatchewan at the end of July, appealing for a coalition government.[9]

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[6] Graham, Vol. I, p. 161.

[7] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to N. W. Rowell, 25 July 1917.

[8] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, C. Sifton to Borden, 25 July 1917, p. 40337; J. W. Dafoe Papers, G. H. Barr to Dafoe, 27 July 1917; L. G. Thomas, pp. 180-81.

Both the conscriptionist and anti-conscriptionist forces were manoeuvring for control of the Winnipeg convention, and there were hints of rigging before the convention opened. As one Regina Liberal wrote to J. W. Dafoe:

> Is it to be an open convention, or are delegates appointed by local associations only entitled to be present? If the latter course is adopted I fear that the Liberal machine of this province which so ably demonstrated its capacity in the conduct of our recent provincial elections to control the foreign vote (and there is no doubt that the conscription argument was used with very good effect even in our provincial election) will absolutely control the situation, and those in sympathy with the policy as enunciated by ... yourself will not have an opportunity of placing themselves on record.[10]

Likewise, Laurier Liberals feared that the Siftons, Dafoe and Calder were organizing conscriptionist delegations to swing the Winnipeg convention in their favour.[11]

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[9] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to G. Waldron, 3 August 1917; Dafoe, pp. 412-17.

[10] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, G. H. Barr to Dafoe, 27 July 1917.

In Alberta and British Columbia, and to a lesser degree in Saskatchewan, Laurier Liberals were able to elect enough delegates to make a forthright repudiation of the Liberal leader and a clear endorsement of conscription impossible. The ambiguous resolutions that were adopted served to widen rather than heal the growing rift within Liberal ranks over conscription and coalition. The convention was in fact a disaster for the Liberal party on the prairies. It had not crystallized western sentiments, but distorted them. The Laurier Liberals who had influenced the convention did not reflect common Liberal feeling in the west.[12] Apparently sensing the popular sentiment for union in the country, Calder, Sifton and Crerar arrived in Ottawa later in the month prepared to discuss an immediate coalition.[13] In order to make their sudden reversal of view following the Winnipeg convention intelligible to their followers in the west, they informed the Prime Minister on 25 August that they favoured a national government, but under a new leader.[14]

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[11] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, A. McLeod to Laurier, 27 July 1917, pp. 196359-60; Laurier to A. McLeod, 31 July 1917, pp. 196361-62.

[12] *Leader*, 8-10 August 1917; Dafoe, pp. 418-22; Cook, pp. 79-80; Graham, Vol. I, pp. 161-62.

[13] PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, A. R. Ford to Willison, 21 August 1917, p. 10997; J. W. Dafoe Papers, C. Sifton to Dafoe, 22 August 1917.

[14] PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, J. A. Calder, T. A. Crerar, A. B. Hudson, A. Sifton to Borden, 25 August 1917, p. 40077. Borden at

Borden was quite willing to make way for another, but the cabinet absolutely refused to hear of it.[15] Negotiations with the four seemed to have come to an end,[16] yet seven weeks later Calder, Crerar and Sifton agreed to join a coalition government with Borden at its head.

Why this change of heart? One reason must surely have been the War Time Elections Act, introduced by Arthur Meighen on 6 September. Its terms, as Liberals themselves could see at once, were ingeniously and obviously contrived to discriminate against them. For the duration of the war, it enfranchised the wives, widows, mothers, sisters and daughters of men who had served or were serving overseas. At the same time, all men who were of enemy alien birth or habitually spoke an enemy tongue, and who had not been naturalized until after 31 March 1902, were deprived of the right to vote, as were Mennonites, Doukhobors and conscientious objectors. By adding a significant number of voters who might be expected to support conscription, and the government which had had

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once sensed that this was the reason for their request. "I know that Calder and Sifton were strongly opposed to any change of leadership," he wrote to J. S. Willison, "but they had to bring their following and they desired to bring their organization with them and those with whom they conferred required some change to make their position at the Winnipeg Convention less inconsistent with their future support." (PAC, J. S. Willison Papers, R. L. Borden to Willison, 31 August 1917, p. 2516.)

[15] Borden, Vol. II, pp. 742-46; Graham, Vol. I, pp. 162-63.

[16] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to J. A. Glen, 6 September 1917.

the courage to introduce it, and removing a large number of voters who had cast their ballots for the Liberals in the past and could be expected to do so again, the War Time Elections Act promised to make things very difficult for the Liberal party in the next election, particularly on the prairies. While it seems clear that the War Time Elections Act was not introduced when it was simply as a means of coercing Calder and his hesitant western colleagues into union, this did prove to be one of its immediate effects.[17]

In Calder's case there may have been another reason, namely the political situation in his own province. By late September, when only a hard core of Liberal partisans in the west remained opposed to union, J. W. Dafoe concluded that this opposition was centred in Saskatchewan, and was led by W. R. Motherwell, George Langley, George Bell and A. P. McNab, all ministers in the provincial government. These men believed they had built an invincible party organization by skilfully feeding the voters on hints of the evils of "big business" and the "predatory interests" of the east. Borden had become the personification of these evils in their caricature, making it difficult for them to come to terms with him:

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[17] Graham, Vol. I, pp. 163-70. For some months the Borden government had been giving consideration to a measure restricting the aliens' franchise. In Saskatchewan, as elsewhere across the country, there was wide support for such a step, as Borden's correspondence during the summer of 1917 reveals. (PAC, R. L. Borden Papers, J. Caswell to Borden, 28 July 1917, pp. 123157-58; J. Gillespie to Borden, 4 August 1917, p. 123190; Rev. J. C. Madill to Borden, 14 August 1917, p. 123223.) Of course residents of the province who were of German or Austro-Hungarian extraction were incensed when the terms of the War Time Elections Act were made known. (PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Rev. B. Doerfler to Laurier, 7 September 1917, pp. 196897-98.)

> The movement for a union government once it became formidable, excited the suspicions of this powerful Liberal organization with its following of farmers, suspicious and jealous of Eastern influences; with result that there was an outburst of party feelings wh[ich] showed itself in ... a rabid press campaign directed against ... the Tory party generally, Eastern interest, etc ....
>
> It was impossible to glean from the press or from Saskatchewan public men what their objective was. They did not seem to know what they were aiming at. They professed, honestly enough, determination to go ahead with the war and they disclaimed any intention to support Laurier. There was, I think, an idea in their heads that with the strength of their party organization and the popular sense of grievances [*sic*] they w[oul]d send a large body of independent Liberals to Ottawa to deal with the situation as it w[oul]d appear when new parliament met. The possibility that alternately a union with the Conservatives w[oul]d be necessary was always freely acknowledged; but they wanted an election first.

All along Calder had been afraid that he would not be able to carry his colleagues with him and Dafoe and others who favoured union had been "carrying on a campaign of education directed towards bringing ab[ou]t a change of mind among the Saskatchewan leaders ...." Finally, on 29 September, Dafoe was able to report to Borden that these efforts had succeeded. Motherwell and the others had "agreed to support Calder if he enters a union government; and this means that the whole province will get in line."[18]

The final negotiations paving the way for the entry of Calder and the other westerners into the Borden government took place in Ottawa in early October. At first some of Borden's colleagues, notably J. D. Reid and Arthur Meighen, strenuously objected to Calder and the others being taken in, but Borden, influenced no doubt by Clifford Sifton "who had always regarded the inclusion of Calder especially as important" proceeded to meet with the western Liberals on 8 October to discuss terms.[19] Fearful that Borden might give too much away, Meighen insisted that an equal number of Liberal and Conservative Unionists be nominated in western ridings, and that western portfolios in the reconstructed ministry be shared equally. These conditions were accepted, and on 12 October Calder, Sifton and Crerar were sworn in as members of the Union Government, with Calder taking the portfolio of Immigration and Colonization.[20]

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[18] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to R. L. Borden, 29 September 1917.

The new government of which Calder was a member at once began the final preparations for what was to be one of the most bitterly fought elections in Canadian history. Parliament had been dissolved on 6 October, the day before its term would have expired, and 17 December was set as the date of polling.[21] In the west, the outcome was likely to depend on the enthusiasm with which the leading Unionist Liberals campaigned for the government, and in Saskatchewan

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[19] Graham, Vol. I, pp. 171-75.

[20] Borden, Vol. II, pp. 751-58; Graham, Vol. I, pp. 175-76. The most prestigious western portfolio, Minister of the Interior, went to Arthur Meighen at his insistence. Calder was later to recall that he took the portfolio of Immigration and Colonization because he did not wish to "take charge of a department necessitating constant long hours of arduous work." (Turner, "Reminiscences of J. A. Calder", p. 73.)

[21] Graham, Vol. I, p. 178.

Borden had an enormous advantage over Laurier. J. A. Calder had been the head of the vast and intricate party machine while in the provincial cabinet, and he was able to use it for the benefit of the Unionist cause.[22] The Conservative party contributed to a new combined election organization, the National Government Association of Saskatchewan, under Calder's direction. It was arranged that six of the province's sixteen federal ridings would nominate Conservatives and ten Unionist Liberals.[23] There was friction of course, and not a little hard feeling, but Calder and Arthur Meighen managed to resolve the quarrels which inevitably arose between rival candidates.[24]

For those Saskatchewan Liberals who remained loyal to Laurier, the prospects were far from encouraging. The "foreign vote" had been largely eliminated, the province's daily newspapers called with one voice for the election of Unionist candidates, and there was no money and no organization with which to contest the election.[25] W. E. Knowles, a Moose Jaw lawyer who had represented the Liberal party in Parliament since 1906, was persuaded to take charge of the campaign in Saskatchewan, and he agreed, somewhat reluctantly, to do so.[26] "Everybody here in the old Organization seems frightened out of his wits of Calder," Knowles lamented in an appeal to Laurier to come and speak in the province.

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[22] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Turgeon to F. Oliver, 22 October 1917; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, F. Oliver to Laurier, 29 October 1917, pp. 197823-24.

[23] *Daily Post*, 25 October 1917.

[24] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, D. McLean [*sic*] to Meighen, 2 November 1917, p. 6526; R. L. Borden Papers, A Meighen to Borden, 29 December 1917, pp. 127467-72.

[25] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Turgeon to Rev. B. Doerfler, 29 October 1917; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. E. Knowles to F. Oliver, 24 October 1917, pp. 198105-108.

> I believe a meeting by you in Regina would bring the Provincial Government from under the bed. If the muzzle were taken off of them and off of our Provincial Members (which I really think will be the result of your visit) we would have a different account to give for ourselves on Polling Day.[27]

Sir Wilfrid did speak in Regina, but it did not have the effect which Knowles had desired. In order to avoid an open split within their ranks between Laurier and Unionist Liberals, the provincial party reached "... a sort of gentleman's understanding that neither ... would take part in extensive campaigning."[28] Motherwell and Langley took part in Laurier's Regina meetings, the only members of the provincial cabinet to do so, and Motherwell campaigned on behalf of the local Laurier candidate in Regina.[29] Premier Martin announced his support for the Unionist cause, but was careful to point out that his views were not binding on any member of his government.[30]

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[26] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Laurier to W. E. Knowles, 3 November 1917, p. 198109; W. E. Knowles to Laurier, 6 November 1917, pp. 198103-104; same to same, 23 November 1917, p. 198620.

[27] *Ibid.*, W. E. Knowles to Laurier, 24 November 1917, p. 198649.

[28] *Ibid.*, G. Langley to Laurier, 15 January 1918, p. 199389.

[29] *Leader*, 10 December 1917, 12 December 1917.

The result of the federal election in Saskatchewan, as elsewhere throughout the west, was a sweeping victory for the Union Government. Not a single Laurier Liberal was elected in the province which had given Sir Wilfrid such overwhelming support in previous federal contests.[31] The memory of this rebuff continued to rankle in the hearts of those whose loyalty to the party had not wavered. In a move that was doubtless intended to conciliate Laurier Liberals in the province, Martin took W. E. Knowles into the cabinet in May 1918,[32] but the gesture did not soften their resentment over the way Sir Wilfrid had been deserted the year before. "As the months go by," Knowles confided to Laurier shortly after he had entered the provincial government,

> I am more than ever impressed with and convinced of the greatness of the mistake made by Unionist Liberals last fall. It requires self-control to keep from words of

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[30] *Ibid.*, 10 December 1917.

[31] *Directory of Federal Elections*, p. 10.

[32] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, Laurier to W. E. Knowles, 28 June 1918, p. 200852. Knowles' entry into the cabinet was part of a wider reorganization of the government necessitated by the retirement of George Bell, the Minister of Telephones. The Telephones portfolio did not go to Knowles, as might have been expected under the circumstances, but to an already overburdened C. A. Dunning, who, in addition to his responsibilities as Provincial Treasurer, was also busy encouraging greater agricultural production as a member of the Canada Food Board. Knowles instead was named Provincial Secretary. (*Leader*, 16 May 1918.)

> bitterness for I am absolutely convinced that, with regard to most of the Unionist Liberals ... their motive was not *bona fide* and was three quarters self interest and the other quarter not far removed from treachery to the Liberal party.[33]

The same sentiments were shared by W. R. Motherwell, who longed for the day when Liberals would be reunited under "their old and beloved Chieftain", and by others in the provincial party.[34] These differences would remain hidden from public view until peace had returned, but the wider divisions within Saskatchewan society created by the war were apparent for all to see as the struggle with Germany and Austria-Hungary entered its final year.

In the wake of the 1917 federal election campaign, and the continuing controversy over bilingual teaching in Manitoba and Ontario, the cry of "English only in Saskatchewan schools" became in 1918 the panacea for all the province's ills, educational and otherwise. To an increasingly vocal segment of the province's Anglo-Protestant majority the maintenance of democracy, the Empire and the Canadian nation seemed to require that all "foreign" languages be banned from Saskatchewan.[35] The loudest outcry, naturally, was against the use of German. There were some who wanted to go so far as to suppress even the holding of religious services in German,[36] but Ruthenian, French and other languages did not escape their notice either. One after another, the Grain Growers, the School Trustees, the Orange Lodge, the S.A.R.M., the Baptist Conference and the Anglican Synod of Saskatchewan all called for the exclusive use of the English language and English readers in the schools.[37]

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[33] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. E. Knowles to Laurier, 15 July 1918, p. 200853.

[34] AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to W. Laurier, 30 July 1918, pp. 12603-604; PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, H. M. Arnaud to Laurier, 19 September 1918, pp. 201300-301.

[35] R. Huel, "The French Canadians and the Language Question, 1918", *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXIII, No. 1 (Winter, 1970), pp. 4-5.

The stormiest debate occurred at the Trustees' convention in Saskatoon. From the opening of proceedings, extremist English-speaking trustees were in control, and not a single man with a "foreign" name was nominated for any executive position.[38] On the second day resolutions were presented to the delegates demanding that English be the only language of instruction in the classroom, and that no language but English be taught during school hours. President-elect J. F. Bryant, a prominent Regina Conservative whose vituperative attacks against non-Anglo-Saxons and their influence in Saskatchewan public life had enlivened many a campaign meeting during the recent provincial election,[39] asserted that one language was necessary to force the cosmopolitan population of the province into a unified whole, and was warmly applauded. French and German-speaking trustees argued in vain that the knowledge of an additional language did not affect a man's loyalty, and that a nation could speak more than one language and still remain united. When one French-speaking delegate attempted to contrast bilingual Belgium, and its proud record in the war, with that of unilingual Australia, which had refused to adopt conscription, he was shouted down. Appeals to the convention to make a distinction between the teaching of French and the teaching of other languages met with a similar response, and the resolutions were approved by a near-unanimous vote "to the accompaniment of loud cheering and sustained applause."[40]

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[36] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Turgeon to J. A. Calder, 27 July 1918.

[37] Huel, "Language Question," pp. 5-9.

[38] *Daily Post*, 21 February 1918.

[39] See, for example, *ibid.*, 14 June 1917, 16 June 1917.

The campaign against the use of German, Ruthenian, French and other "foreign" languages gathered momentum with each passing month. In September 1918 the Joint Legislation Committee of the Sons of England and the Orange Lodge began distributing thousands of circulars urging the public to demand a satisfactory settlement of the "language question".[41] During the last months of the war the Premier's office was deluged with letters and petitions from rural municipal, village and town councils, school boards, S.G.G.A. "locals", branches of the Orange Lodge and private individuals demanding that all instruction in Saskatchewan schools be given in the English language.[42] It would be easy to dismiss this campaign as the work of a few bigots seeking to take advantage of the wartime hysteria against all things "foreign", for the number of schools in which these languages were being taught was relatively small. A special survey conducted by the Department of Education in 1918 disclosed that French was being taught in 77 schools, German in 71 and Ruthenian in 37.[43] It cannot be doubted that for many in the province "... appeals to passion overruled rationality in an effort to ensure that Quebec, and all it stood for, would not be reproduced or perpetuated in Saskatchewan",[44] but there were others who were sincerely concerned about the enormity of the task of assimilating the diverse races which had settled in the west.

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[40] *Ibid.*, 22 February 1918; *Leader*, 22 February 1918.

[41] *Saskatoon Star*, 14 September 1918.

One of these was Dr. J. T. M. Anderson. He had come to Saskatchewan from Ontario in 1908, and after teaching school for a time near Yorkton and then at Grenfell, he had been appointed inspector of schools for the Yorkton district in 1911.[45] In this capacity he soon became something of an expert on the special difficulties encountered in educating the children of the "New Canadian", and during the war he wrote a book on the subject. Largely forgotten now, *The Education of the New-Canadian* described the success that he and other western educators had achieved in this field, and outlined various ways in which the teaching of English and other subjects could be improved in the "foreign" districts. That this was, as the book's subtitle claimed, "Canada's Greatest Educational Problem", Anderson had not the slightest doubt:

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[42] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, pp. 17528-18466.

[43] Huel, "Language Question," p. 10. There were then more than 4,000 school districts in Saskatchewan, 3,941 of which were actually operating schools. (Saskatchewan, Department of Education, *Annual Report*, 1918 [Regina: King's Printer, 1919], p. 22.)

[44] Huel, "Language Question," p. 5.

[45] AS, S. J. Latta Papers, memorandum re Dr. J. T. M. Anderson, 20 May 1924.

> When the vastness of this immigrant tide that has almost unceasingly set towards our Dominion during the past ten years is considered, we may well ask whether this insweeping immigration can be Canadianized. The safety and happiness of our nation depend upon their assimilation ... Unless this fact be realized there can be little likelihood of our developing in these peoples a true Canadian spirit and attachment to British ideals and institutions. We may despise the 'foreigner' and all that is non-English, but the fact remains that this element is here to stay, and its presence is bound to make an impress upon our future citizenship. The paramount factor in racial fusion is undoubtedly the education of the children of these non-English races ....[46]

Whatever its motivation, this rising tide of sentiment favouring an end to foreign language teaching could not be ignored by Premier Martin who, like his predecessor, was also Minister of Education. In January 1918, before the agitation had reached a fever pitch, Martin had discussed the matter with his senior departmental officials. On the basis of these consultations he drafted an amendment to the School Act in August 1918. It stipulated that all classes were to be taught in the English language. French would no longer be accorded any special status as a language of instruction, though if the local school board agreed, it could be taught as a subject of study for one hour each day.[47] A government amendment had to be more than Martin's own draft, of course. It would require the backing of the cabinet as well, and in the weeks prior to the opening of the fall session of the Legislature, there was to be much cabinet uneasiness over the proposed amendment.

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[46] J. T. M. Anderson, *The Education of the New Canadian: A Treatise on Canada's Greatest Educational Problem* (Toronto: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1918), pp. 88-89.

In the meantime, Martin took another step to improve the teaching of English in those districts of the province where it was not the mother tongue. Shortly after Martin had become Premier he had commissioned Harold W. Foght, a noted American educator, to conduct a study of the provincial school system. His findings, which were presented to the cabinet in January 1918, were highly critical, particularly with respect to the quality of immigrant education. To remedy this problem, a new position was created within the Department of Education, that of Director of Education among the New Canadians, and in October Dr. J. T. M. Anderson was named to fill it. In co-operation with the regular school inspectors, Dr. Anderson was to see to it that fully qualified English-speaking teachers were placed in every school in the province's "foreign" districts. To this end, the Department proposed to pay bonuses to qualified teachers who agreed to work in such schools, and arrange special classes in the province's normal schools to prepare these teachers for the unique problems they would encounter.[48]

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[47] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, memorandum re suggested amendments to Section 177 of the School Act, 12 August 1918, p. 17681. Martin's motives in drafting this amendment have become the subject of a good deal of scholarly debate. Huel is of the opinion, and this seems the sounder view on the basis of the fragmentary evidence that does exist in the personal correspondence of the Premier and his contemporaries at Regina and Ottawa, that Martin was simply capitulating to the wishes of the province's Anglo-Protestant majority, whose violent opposition to all "foreign" languages he felt he could no longer ignore. (Huel, "Language Question", pp. 9-11.) Smith advances a more intriguing, though highly speculative, interpretation. He argues that Martin was only too keenly aware of the fact that he had been the party's second choice after J. A. Calder to succeed Walter Scott in 1916, and was still regarded by some Liberals as being too much under the influence of the Minister of Immigration and Colonization. The language issue gave Martin the opportunity to put his own stamp on the party. He prepared this amendment to the School Act, which clearly repudiated his predecessor's policy with regard to minority rights, as a test of loyalty to him as party leader. (Smith, pp. 119-22.) The difficulty with such an argument is that there is little tangible evidence to support it. Martin was easily the most secretive of the four men who led the Liberal party during the period 1905-1929, and in the absence of a diary his true motives to a large extent still remain a mystery.

The campaign for "English only" was one symptom of the war-weariness that was everywhere apparent in the province by 1918. Another was the growing militancy of Saskatchewan's trade unions and the rash of strikes that swept the province during the last year of the war. This restiveness was not the result of any single factor. Rather it was the product of a whole series of discontents that had welled up in the Saskatchewan labour movement as the war dragged on. For one thing, workingmen in the province felt aggrieved by certain policies that had been adopted by the federal government.

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[48] Saskatchewan, *A Survey of Education in the Province of Saskatchewan, Canada. A Report to the Government of the Province of Saskatchewan by Harold W. Foght, Ph.D.* (Regina: King's Printer, 1918), pp. 145-54; *Leader*, 14 October 1918.

Many, at least of those who had not enlisted in the C.E.F., had been opposed to conscription, and many of the "New Canadians" among them had been deprived of the right to vote in 1917 by the War Time Elections Act. Then too, a large segment of the labour force in Saskatchewan had not benefited greatly, if at all, from the prosperity generated by the war. Those employed in the construction industry, whether unionized tradesmen or unorganized labourers, had been thrown out of work at the beginning of hostilities. There were no substantial industrial plants in the province to attract large war orders and provide alternate employment for these men. Many had sought refuge from adversity in the C.E.F. or on the land, but even those who kept their jobs during the war worked for wages that were substantially lower than were paid in eastern Canada.[49]

The Saskatchewan workingman's resentment over the war policies of the federal government and the massive inflation of the war years -- nearly 40 per cent between 1916 and 1918 -- was reflected in the increasing use of the strike weapon. There were only two disputes in the province in each of 1914 and 1915, but in 1916 the number jumped to six and in the last year of the war to nine. Regina was hardest hit, claiming seven of those nine disputes in 1918, mainly in the building trades.[50] The government itself was not immune, for one of the labour disputes that year involved its own employees. This strike, which began on 23 October 1918, was the result of a wage dispute between the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the Department of Telephones. The minister, Charles A. Dunning, immediately made a statement to the press, reviewing the negotiations which had taken place between the union and the Department, and predicting an increase in telephone rates if the strikers' demands were met. He blamed the strike on visits of a "Bolshevik agitator" from the United States who had been working in the province for the past two or three months, and declared that the issue at stake was whether the people of Saskatchewan would manage their own telephone system or accept dictation by "foreign agitators".[51] There was little interruption of telephone service in the province as a result of the strike. Only 85 of the 404 employees walked out, and then only in Regina and Saskatoon, where the automatic telephone service carried on unattended.[52] Direct negotiations between Dunning and the chairman of the strikers' committee resulted in a compromise settlement on 9 November, bringing an end to Saskatchewan's relatively short-lived telephone strike.[53]

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[49] W. J. C. Cherwinski, "Organized Labour in Saskatchewan: The T.L.C. Years, 1905-1945" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, University of Alberta, 1971), pp. 42-55.

[50] Brown and Cook, p. 309; *Agriculture Report*, 1919, pp. 33-34.

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[51] *Western Labour News*, 4 October 1918; *Leader*, 22 October 1918; *Daily Post*, 23 October 1918. This "Bolshevik agitator" was in fact a union organizer for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers.

[52] *Leader*, 25 October 1918, 28-29 October 1918.

Then on 11 November came the Armistice that brought an end to the war in Europe. The Spanish influenza epidemic that was sweeping the province at the time prohibited any indoor ceremonies marking the news of victory, but it did not dampen the impromptu all-night revelry that occurred in cities and towns across Saskatchewan. Everywhere there was a general sense of satisfaction that the war was over at last.[54] Soon "the boys" would be coming home to take up the jobs and careers that had been interrupted by the war. It was widely assumed in the province that their reabsorption into civilian life would be a simple matter, and that once this had been accomplished Saskatchewan would resume the growth that had been anticipated before the breaking of the land boom in 1913. The Martin government proved to be no exception. "Reconstruction in this province", Premier Martin was to declare on more than one occasion in the months after peace returned,

> simply means the beginning of our development again at the point where we left off when war began. We want more railroads, we want more and better roads, we want immigration, and we want better schools.[55]

In some ways, of course, these expectations would be fulfilled. Immigrants would come to take up the remaining vacant lands in Saskatchewan, though never again in such large numbers as before 1914, returned soldiers would be absorbed into civilian life, and public works projects temporarily shelved on account of the war would be resumed. The war had wrought no dramatic changes in the economic life of the province, and the growth and expansion that would take place over the next decade would follow an already familiar pattern.

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[53] *Ibid.*, 9 November 1918.

[54] Abrams, pp. 239-40; Drake, pp. 166-67; Wright, pp. 185-86.

[55] *Leader*, 10 December 1918, 27 March 1919.

In other important respects, though, Saskatchewan was a very different province by 1918. For one thing, the male monopoly of the franchise had been broken, and women in Saskatchewan now enjoyed political equality with men. The Legislature did not yet have a woman member -- that would not come until 1919 with the election of Mrs. Sarah Ramsland in Pelly[56] -- but their political power had already been recognized. In the 1917 provincial election both major parties had made a special appeal in their platforms to the newly-enfranchised woman voter, and by the end of the war the Martin government had made good its pledge to introduce a system of allowances to assist widowed mothers in rearing their children in their own homes.[57] For another, the hotel bar was gone, and complete prohibition was now the law of the land. Not only had Saskatchewan banned the sale of liquor within its borders, but the Union Government had prohibited all interprovincial trade in liquor by order-in-council in April 1918. This order, which was to remain in effect until one year after the war ended, had effectively dried up the source of supply for the notorious "export houses" which the Martin government had unsuccessfully tried to legislate out of existence.[58] Whether prohibition would continue to enjoy widespread support in the province once the patriotic stimulus provided by the war was removed and "the boys" returned from overseas remained to be seen. Already there was evidence that the Saskatchewan Temperance Act was being openly flouted. Following the outbreak of the influenza epidemic in 1918 there was a dramatic increase in the number of medical prescriptions which were issued for liquor. One druggist allegedly sold $12,000 worth of liquor on 11 November 1918, for "medicinal purposes" of course, and it was claimed that some doctors in Regina, Saskatoon and other centres were writing 250 or more prescriptions per day during the winter of 1918-1919.[59]

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[56] *Legislative Directory*, p. 44.

[57] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8 Geo. V, Chapter 68.

The war's impact had been felt in Saskatchewan in other ways as well, and the gathering storm over the teaching of "foreign" languages in the schools showed no signs of abating as the Legislature assembled early in December to begin its first peacetime session in five years. There was no hint in the Speech from the Throne that the Liberals intended to bring down legislation dealing with this ticklish subject,[60] but reminders of the government's duty in this matter were soon forthcoming. On 9 December the Joint Legislation Committee of the Sons of England and the Orange Lodge appealed to the Premier to completely eliminate all foreign languages from the schools "in the interests of a united and homogeneous people."[61] Donald Maclean expressed the same hope next day in the House. The Premier remained silent as to the government's intentions, going no farther than to offer the observation that extreme views and extreme legislation had not always given the best results, and that the House should approach the question "... with a degree of broadmindedness ... and a sympathetic viewpoint."[62]

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[58] Pinno, pp. 138-42. In a second attempt to eliminate the "export houses" the Legislature had in 1917 approved a bill levying an annual tax of $1,000 on each place of business maintained for the purpose of exporting liquor from Saskatchewan to other provinces or other countries. The government had been careful not to make the tax a prohibitory one, lest the act be declared *ultra vires* as the earlier legislation had been. (*Leader*, 23 November 1917; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8 Geo. V, Chapter 6.)

[59] *Leader*, 6 November 1919.

Three days later, on 12 December, W. R. Motherwell startled the Legislature and the province by tendering his resignation as Minister of Agriculture, the post he had held since joining the first Scott cabinet in 1905.[63] He gave two reasons for the decision: his impatience with Premier Martin for continuing to support the Union Government after the war had ended, and his opposition to Martin's proposed amendment to the School Act.[64] The fact that Motherwell devoted all but one paragraph of a thirteen page letter of resignation to an elaboration of this first grievance might suggest that his leaving was due mainly to differences in federal politics. To some extent, the evidence does support such a conclusion. No sooner had the Armistice been proclaimed than the Moose Jaw *Times* and the Regina *Leader* called for a return to the party divisions of prewar days, and an end to the Union Government.[65] Motherwell was certainly anxious to see Premier Martin declare himself on the question of continued support for the Union Government, and act, as Walter Scott had acted, as the recognized leader of the federal Liberal party in Saskatchewan.[66] Yet if Martin's unwillingness to renounce his support of the Union Government was indeed the chief reason for Motherwell's resignation, the remarkable thing is that W. E. Knowles or other staunch Laurier Liberals in the cabinet did not resign as well.

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[60] *Journals*, 1918-1919, pp. 9-11.

[61] *Daily Post*, 10 December 1918.

[62] *Leader*, 10 December 1918.

[63] *Ibid.*, 13 December 1918.

It was the Premier's proposed amendment to the School Act, and not differences in federal politics, that was primarily responsible for Motherwell's sudden resignation. Writing to Walter

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[64] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Martin, 10 December 1918, pp. 2057-69.

[65] *Leader*, 21 November 1918, 27 November 1918; AS, W. R. Motherwell Papers, Motherwell to C. M. Goddard, 5 December 1918, p. 12622.

[66] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Martin, 9 December 1918, p. 2055; same to same, 10 December 1918, pp. 2057-58.

Scott, who was still convalescing in the United States, Motherwell explained that he could not support legislation which left fewer privileges to the province's French-speaking minority "than did rabid mad Ontario under regulation 17."[67] In caucus the Minister of Agriculture had been supported in his stand by W. F. A. Turgeon and George Langley. C. A. Dunning, A. P. McNab and W. E. Knowles had been opposed, and S. J. Latta, Calder's successor as Minister of Highways, had been "friendly ... but almost neutral."[68] Motherwell's letter of resignation had referred only briefly to this "strictly provincial issue" which had caused him to suffer "the agonies of a veritable Gethsemane" so as not to make Turgeon's position as the sole French-speaking minister in the cabinet more difficult than it already was.[69]

Motherwell remained hopeful that Premier Martin might be prepared to modify the amendment because some Liberals believed that the matter required further consideration. His expectations were fulfilled, and on 13 December a jubilant Motherwell was able to inform Walter Scott:

> Have just had another caucus at my request as a private member

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[67] AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Scott, 13 December 1918, p. 78108.

[68] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 27 December 1918, pp. 20236-38.

[69] AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. F. A. Turgeon to Scott, 18 December 1918, pp. 78146-47.

> and Martin has come through and granted what I wanted - not to take anything from the French - the boys when they understood the matter objecting strongly to his draft.[70]

He also informed Laurier of the victory, but cautioned Sir Wilfrid to keep the news confidential for the time being:

> The reason that I suggest this is because this is the result of a decision of caucus last night and besides Mr. Martin is a very vacillating man, as you know, and there is no telling just yet what he is going to do until it is done. Something else may happen today that will send him back to where he was yesterday. That is the way things have been seesawing here, back and forth during the past two weeks.[71]

And what of W. F. A. Turgeon? He, more than Motherwell, ought to have suffered "the agonies of a veritable Gethsemane" over Martin's amendment, for the Attorney-General had long been regarded by French Catholics in the province as their special representative in the cabinet. On 12 December, the day Motherwell resigned, Turgeon admitted that he had reached the same decision "... only after much hesitation and with many misgivings ... as to the wisdom of the policy which have not yet been entirely removed."[72] Even after caucus had agreed to modify the proposed School Act amendment, Turgeon was still apparently determined to resign, and informed Archbishop Mathieu of his intentions. The news "literally sickened" the Archbishop, who believed that the resignation would be a calamity:

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[70] *Ibid.*, W. R. Motherwell to Scott, 13 December 1918, p. 78110.

[71] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Laurier, 14 December 1918, p. 202129.

[72] AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. F. A. Turgeon to Scott, 12 December 1918, pp. 78099-100.

> Aussi je crois qu'il serait beaucoup mieux sacrifier cette première année qui remplacerait le cours primaire que de vous voir partir, si réellement le gouvernement ne peut faire accepter cette faveur .... Fasse le ciel que vous restiez à votre poste au prix de n'importe quel sacrifice.[73]

Mathieu's argument convinced the Attorney-General to remain in the cabinet, but he regretted the whole performance of the Premier over the language issue.[74]

On 17 December Premier Martin brought down the legislation which had cost him one cabinet colleague and nearly cost him another. The provisions which had existed in the School Act since 1901, permitting instruction in languages other than English during the last hour of the school day, were abolished. Henceforth English would be the only language of instruction permitted in the schools, except that French could be used as a language of instruction in the first grade, and as a subject of study for one hour a day in subsequent grades.[75] Predictably, the legislation drew criticism from some quarters because it did not go far enough. From Calgary, where he was serving as a military chaplain, Walter Scott's old foe, Rev. Murdoch MacKinnon, thundered:

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[73] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, O. E. Mathieu à Turgeon, 17 décembre 1918.

[74] AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. F. A. Turgeon to Scott, 18 December 1918, p. 78145.

[75] *Leader*, 18 December 1918.

> French must go. Quebec failed us in the war. We do not want Quebec reproduced in Saskatchewan ... Let all enlightened citizens speak, write and wire until French goes with German.[76]

On the other hand, some French-speaking residents of the province were disappointed because it offered less than they had hoped for.[77]

There was never any doubt that the bill would pass. The debate in the Legislature grew heated at times, but none of the Liberals broke ranks when Donald Maclean introduced an amendment making English the only language of instruction in the province's elementary schools. It was rejected on a straight party vote, with the Liberals justifying the exception that had been granted to the French language on the grounds of the historic rights of the French in Canada.[78] The Conservatives continued to oppose the bill in committee,[79] and made one last attempt to eliminate the special status accorded to the French language when the Legislature reassembled after the Christmas recess. It too was rebuffed, and the bill passed third reading on 8 January by a vote of 42-7.[80] The agitation over the teaching of "foreign" languages had already begun to die down by the time the School Act amendment became law, and it caused no further trouble for the Martin government.

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[76] *Daily Post*, 18 December 1918.

[77] Huel, "Language Question," pp. 12-14.

[78] *Journals*, 1918-1919, pp. 39-40; *Leader*, 19-20 December 1918; *Daily Post*, 18-20 December 1918. At least one Liberal, W. F. A. Turgeon, had expressed fears that a few backbenchers, among them Bernhard Larson of Milestone, might break party ranks and vote for the Opposition amendment. (AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. F. A. Turgeon to Scott, 18 December 1918, p. 78147.)

[79] *Leader*, 21 December 1918.

If the Liberals were pleased to have this legacy of the war years finally laid to rest, they were not at all anxious to see the War Time Elections Act suffer a similar fate. On 9 January a Liberal back-bencher, J. G. Gardiner, introduced a resolution demanding its immediate repeal, and precipitated another noisy debate in the Legislature. This one was more to the Liberals' liking, of course. They roundly condemned the War Time Elections Act as "the meanest and most despicable to which any party or government had ever stooped."[81] Donald Maclean, who had privately informed the bill's author a few days before that it ought to be repealed "... at the earliest possible opportunity, and before a member of the Opposition moves to that effect ...",[82] felt obliged to defend it in the House, but he was one of only two Conservatives to do so. Indeed the stoutest defence of the measure came not from the Conservatives at all, but from two of the soldier representatives. Harris Turner declared that the people he represented were practically unanimous in the belief that men of foreign birth should not be allowed to vote on matters of national importance at the present time. As for the Liberal contention that the War Time Elections Act would discourage immigration, Turner expressed the opinion that Canada would not want any more Germans or Austrians "for a long time to come." F. B. Bagshaw accused the Liberals of introducing the resolution solely for the purpose of embarrassing the Union Government, and ingratiating themselves with the "alien enemy" whose votes had always proved so valuable at election time. Both Bagshaw and Turner joined with the Conservatives in voting against the resolution, but it passed nonetheless by an overwhelming majority.[83]

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[80] *Journals*, 1918-1919, pp. 47-48; *Leader*, 9 January 1919.

[81] *Leader*, 10 January 1919.

[82] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, D. Maclean to Meighen, 6 January 1919, p. 861.

Apart from the School Act amendment, the legislation of this first postwar session aroused little controversy and attracted little attention. Co-operative stockyards were incorporated in Prince Albert and Moose Jaw in an effort to overcome the disadvantages Saskatchewan stock growers experienced in marketing their cattle.[84] An agreement between the Saskatchewan, Manitoba and federal governments to build an experimental lignite briquetting plant in the Souris coal fields was formally ratified.[85] A Minimum Wage Act was approved which fixed standard minimum wages and hours of employment for women workers in the province's cities. A Minimum Wage Board, two of the five members of which were to be women, was given the responsibility for setting wage rates at a level it judged adequate to meet the current cost of living, establishing maximum hours of employment and ensuring that proper sanitary conditions were maintained.[86] There was also a lengthy, if inconclusive, discussion concerning the necessity of resuming branch railway construction in the province now that the war was over. The southwest remained the area of greatest need. Many homesteaders there were still fifty or sixty miles from the nearest railway, and at one point in the debate the government intimated that it was prepared to build lines itself as a last resort.[87]

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[83] *Journals*, 1918-1919, pp. 54-55; *Leader*, 10 January 1919, 14 January 1919.

[84] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 9 Geo. V, Chapters 87-88; J. H. Archer, "The Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XII, No. 2 (Spring, 1959), pp. 53-55.

[85] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 9 Geo. V, Chapter 89. The provincial government had set up a small experimental plant in the Souris coal fields in 1913, in the expectation that a commercial

The Legislature completed its business on 5 February, and two weeks later the government announced a general cabinet reorganization to fill the vacancy caused by Motherwell's sudden departure. No new members were added, but three portfolios changed hands.

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briquette could be produced that would be able to compete with other fuels then in use in the province. The work had been suspended in 1914, but difficulties in obtaining supplies of coal from the United States during the war brought a renewed interest in the possibilities of briquetting Saskatchewan lignite. A Lignite Utilization Board, funded jointly by the federal, Manitoba and Saskatchewan governments, was established in 1918 for the purpose of conducting further experimental work. (White, pp. 66-69.)

[86] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 9 Geo. V, Chapter 84.

[87] *Leader*, 10 December 1918, 16-18 January 1919, 21 January 1919.

Premier Martin added Railways to his responsibilities, C. A. Dunning became Minister of Agriculture and W. E. Knowles took over the Telephone Department.[88] Motherwell's differences with Premier Martin remained unresolved. Though he was presumably satisfied with the concessions which had been incorporated into the School Act amendment, he still could not abide Martin's refusal to take a public stand against Union Government. "With Martin refusing to budge, Knowles in his Cabinet and Calder the Chairman of the old Liberal Executive and Dunning in charge of organization ...", the former Minister of Agriculture lamented to Laurier in February 1919, "this policy of drifting is going to continue and the evidence increases that a second betrayal of the Liberal party is contemplated by our provincial leaders ...."[89] Motherwell was no longer in the cabinet, but his opinions still carried a good deal of weight within the ranks of the party. Whatever their outward appearance of harmony at war's end, Liberals in Saskatchewan had felt the internal strain of the struggle over conscription and coalition, and Motherwell's resignation was proof that the wounds had not yet healed. Ardent Laurier Liberals would continue to regard the Saskatchewan Premier with suspicion as long as he remained unwilling to dissociate himself from J. A. Calder and the Unionist cause. In 1917 W. M.

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[88] *Ibid.*, 17 February 1919.

[89] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Laurier, 7 February 1919, pp. 202705-706.

Martin had led the provincial Liberals to an election victory of unparalleled magnitude; now it remained to be seen whether he would be as skilful at mending the internal schism which threatened to erode his government's strength from within.

Restoring harmony to a divided party was only one of Premier Martin's concerns after the return of peace in November 1918. The Liberal government of Saskatchewan, in common with governments elsewhere, faced all the problems of a confused and difficult period of postwar readjustment. For one thing, the discharged soldiers would soon be returning to the province. The task of re-establishing these men in peacetime occupations fell largely to the federal authorities, but the government at Regina also assisted returned men in finding employment. Ottawa's efforts were concentrated in a scheme for settling soldiers on the land. Through the Soldier Settlement Board, which had been created in 1917, the Borden government sought to assist veterans in taking up homesteads and start them in farming with stock and equipment. Shortly after the war ended, the scope of the Board's activities was extended, and in 1919 the government began acquiring vacant land held by speculators, uncultivated Indian reserves and school lands for sale to returned men on favourable terms. The response was disappointing. In Saskatchewan, only 4,927 returned men had taken up land by November 1920. The vast majority of the returning veterans showed no interest in availing themselves of the help offered in acquiring a farm. Some had no training as farmers and no inclination to farm; others who had been farmers before enlisting clearly did not want to go back to that life now that the war was over.[90] Instead they looked for work in the cities and towns, but apart from building construction, which was given a fillip by the return of peace,[91] there was little significant industry in Saskatchewan's urban centres. The cessation of the abnormal wartime demand brought unemployment in its wake, and the rapid demobilization of the soldiers only added to the surplus of labour. Despite the apparent willingness of some firms, such as the Quaker Oats mill in Saskatoon, to fire all alien employees and hire returned soldiers in their place,[92] there were not enough jobs to go around. The provincial government also gave preference to veterans in filling vacancies in the civil service, but by the spring of 1919 only some 150 men had been taken on.[93]

The widespread unemployment and the spiralling cost of living that accompanied the return of peace contributed to a sense of unease within the ranks of organized labour. No part of the country was immune, but it was most evident west of the Great Lakes.

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[90] Graham, Vol. I, pp. 245-48; E. C. Morgan, "Soldier Settlement in the Prairie Provinces," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXI, No. 2 (Spring, 1968), pp. 41-44.

[91] The total value of building permits issued in the cities of Regina, Saskatoon and Moose Jaw increased from $2,177,290 in 1918 to $3,694,505 in 1919 and $5,281,600 in 1920. (Saskatchewan, Bureau of Labour and Industries, *Annual Report*, 1921 [Regina: King's Printer, 1921], p. 21.

[92] *Leader*, 31 January 1919.

[93] *Ibid.*, 27 March 1919.

Western trade unionists had begun to demonstrate a greater militancy even during the latter stages of the war, but it was not until 1919 that its full force became apparent. The accumulated discontents of the war years, the unsettled economic conditions that prevailed in the months following the Armistice, and the mounting impatience with the timid cautious leadership of the eastern-dominated Trades and Labour Congress of Canada all gave a tremendous stimulus to the more radical wing of the western labour movement. It found expression in the formation of the One Big Union and in a series of strikes in various cities across the country during the spring and summer of 1919.[94]

Seventeen Saskatchewan delegates attended the Western Labour Conference at Calgary in March 1919 at which the foundations of this new labour organization were laid down. While the participation of the Saskatchewan men was minimal, the majority of them came away no less determined to propagate the gospel of "industrial unionism" than did those from Winnipeg or Vancouver.[95]

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[94] Brown and Cook, pp. 309-14. For a more detailed discussion of the growth of western labour radicalism during this period see M. Robin, *Radical Politics and Canadian Labour, 1880-1930* (Kingston: Industrial Relations Centre, Queen's University, 1968), pp. 138-98; and D. J. Bercuson, "Western Labour Radicalism and the One Big Union: Myths and Realities," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 2 (May, 1974), pp. 3-11. The Winnipeg General Strike has been the subject of two excellent monographs, D. C. Masters' *The Winnipeg General Strike* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), and D. J. Bercuson's more recent *Confrontation at Winnipeg: Labour, Industrial Relations and the General Strike* (Montreal: McGill - Queen's University Press, 1974).

[95] Cherwinski, "Organized Labour in Saskatchewan", pp. 63-65.

The provincial O.B.U. executive at once set to work to convince their fellow Saskatchewan trade unionists of the wisdom of the decision taken at Calgary to form a single industrial organization of all workers that would be independent of the international craft unions which dominated the T.L.C. They met with mixed success. Initially the Moose Jaw Trades and Labour Council gave its approval to the principles of industrial unionism, but when the question of severing its affiliation with the existing craft unions was put to a vote in mid-April, the motion was soundly defeated. The same cautious response was evident in Saskatchewan's capital city, even though the radicals had a stronger influence there. When a packed meeting of the Regina Trades and Labour Council pledged its full support to the O.B.U., the printers' local and the locals of two other international unions promptly disaffiliated themselves from the Council.[96]

The O.B.U.'s struggle to gain a foothold in the province might have attracted little public notice had it not been for the revolutionary talk indulged in by some of its leaders. When the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations visited Regina on 8 May 1919 as part of its cross-country investigation of labour problems, Joseph Sambrook, a member of the provincial O.B.U. executive, advocated the adoption of the Russian Soviet form of government. It was his testimony which gained the most publicity in the local press.[97] Such talk only strengthened the suspicions of the general public and of governments that the O.B.U. was connected in some way with events in Russia and Europe. Thus when the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council issued a call for a general strike to support the demands of employees in the building and metal trades for higher wages and recognition of the right of collective bargaining, and 35,000 workers left their jobs on 15 May, it seemed to many in Canada the beginning of a "Bolshevik" conspiracy to undermine constituted authority.

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[96] *Ibid.*, pp. 85-87.

These developments did not catch the federal authorities unprepared. On 16 May N. W. Rowell wrote to the Saskatchewan Attorney-General to assure him that Ottawa would "... render every assistance in its power to the Provincial and Municipal Authorities in maintaining law and order, and protecting the lives and property of citizens from mob or revolutionary violence." The offer of assistance was gratefully acknowledged, but the provincial government had little reason to expect that the assistance of the R.N.W.M.P. or the military would be necessary. "In this almost purely agricultural Province," Turgeon replied to Rowell on 20 May, "where our centres of population are few and relatively small there must, of course, be much less apprehension than in other parts of Canada."[98]

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[97] *Daily Post*, 8 May 1919; *Leader*, 9 May 1919.

[98] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, N. W. Rowell to Turgeon, 16 May 1919; Turgeon to N. W. Rowell, 20 May 1919.

The course of events over the next few weeks was to prove Turgeon correct. There was some frenzied activity and inflammatory rhetoric, but when it came to actually walking out *en masse* with their Winnipeg brethren, most of Saskatchewan's trade unionists drew back.

In Regina, for instance, a series of mass meetings were held to rally support for the Winnipeg men, and the local Trades and Labour Council began preparations to conduct a strike vote. When the ballots were counted, it was estimated that the majority in favour of a sympathetic strike was two to one, with eleven of the twenty-five locals affiliated with the Council voting to walk out and nine undecided.[99] The prospect of a crippling general strike roused the city's business community to action. On 27 May the Regina *Leader* issued this blunt warning:

> No usurpation of the rights and powers of civic government will be tolerated in Regina. There will be no recognition of 'permits' from any strike committee to do business in this city. There will be nothing even resembling a soviet created here. Law and order will be maintained and, the strikers to the contrary notwithstanding, the business of the community will go on.
>
> If organized labor decides to quit work, in order to express in a mistaken way their sympathy with organized labor in Winnipeg, they cannot be prevented from doing so, but other men will organize to 'carry on' the essential services of the community.[100]

A special meeting of city council that same day authorized the mayor to take any steps necessary to maintain law and order, continue the operation of Regina's public utilities and ensure an adequate food supply.[101] On 28 May members of the city's business and professional community met to form a Citizens' Committee patterned after a similar organization that had been established in Winnipeg.[102] These preparations proved to be unnecessary. By the end of the month the radicals were rapidly losing their grip on the Regina Trades and Labour Council. On 2 June it decided to take no further action in support of the strikers in Winnipeg. A renegade group, dissatisfied with the Council's decision, did form a provisional strike committee, but less than 200 men, chiefly construction labourers, electricians and railway shopmen, left their jobs. Even these began to return to work within a few days, and there were no further efforts to demonstrate solidarity with the men who were out in Winnipeg.[103]

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[99] *Leader*, 27-28 May 1919, 30 May 1919.

[100] *Ibid.*, 27 May 1919.

In Moose Jaw, too, the radicals were in the ascendancy, and in the initial flush of enthusiasm a general strike seemed inevitable.[104] The mood soon changed, and when a strike referendum was conducted at the end of May, only the civic employees, the firefighters and the C.P.R. shopmen were wholeheartedly in favour of walking out. As in Regina, there were the usual rallies, and the city council established an emergency committee to run the utilities in the event of a strike.[105] The street railway employees did go out, though their reasons for doing so seem to have had more to do with local issues than a desire to show their sympathy with Winnipeg labour.[106]

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[101] *Ibid.*, 28 May 1919.

[102] *Ibid.*, 29 May 1919.

[103] *Ibid.*, 3-4 June 1919.

[104] *Ibid.*, 27 May 1919.

Only in Saskatoon did the strike situation assume serious proportions. Within a week after news of the walkout in the Manitoba capital was received, the Saskatoon Trades Council formed a Central Strike Committee and made preparations to hold a strike vote. Eleven local unions indicated a willingness to strike, and proceeded to do so on 28 May. Teamsters continued to deliver water to outlying areas of the city, on orders of the Strike Committee, and motion picture operators also were told to remain at their jobs. Next day the street railway workers, Post Office employees and railway mail clerks walked out, leaving the city without mail service or public transportation. The civic employees voted to remain at their jobs, though, so that Saskatoon's utilities continued to operate without interruption.[107] There were only a few complaints about the withdrawal of services, and these from businessmen who were irritated by the stoppage of mail delivery. They wished to see strike-breakers brought in, but none ever were. On 29 May the federal government ordered the postal employees back to work on pain of dismissal. Thirty-one of the one hundred inside workers heeded this ultimatum, and mail service was restored at the end of the month.[108]

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[105] *Ibid.*, 28 May 1919, 30 May 1919.

[106] *Ibid.*, 3 June 1919, 10 June 1919.

[107] *Ibid.*, 27-29 May 1919.

In the meantime, a delegation of Saskatoon citizens had been despatched to Winnipeg under the auspices of the city council to investigate conditions there. By the time they returned, and issued a report which was on the whole unfavourable to the Winnipeg strikers, enthusiasm for the sympathetic strike had begun to wane in Saskatoon. The Strike Committee attempted to persuade those workers who were maintaining essential services to walk out, but few heeded the call, and groups of men began returning to work without its permission. The street cars began running again on 9 June and two days later the strike was over.[109]

Outside of Saskatchewan's three largest cities there was little evidence of support for the general strike in Winnipeg. Railway workers went out for varying lengths of time at Sutherland, Melville, Watrous and other divisional points in the province, and at Prince Albert the railway shopmen, freight handlers and mail clerks struck briefly.[110] Some towns began to feel the shortage of essentials such as sugar and flour, but there was no real hardship.[111] Farmers in the province seem to have had little sympathy for the Winnipeg strikers. By and large they accepted the view propounded by the Committee of One Thousand that the strike was the work of the O.B.U. and that the O.B.U. was a revolutionary organization. J. B. Musselman, secretary of the S.G.G.A., warned Grain Growers that he had it on good authority that the O.B.U. was bent on confiscating all private property, including land, and establishing a Communist form of government. He told an audience in Moose Jaw that "Canada must look to farmers to save her democratic institutions and grapple successfully with this great menace." At another Grain Growers' convention, in Weyburn, the farmers passed a resolution declaring that they were "opposed to any movement which for the accomplishment of its ends contemplates the overthrow of constituted authority and democratic government."[112]

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[108] *Ibid.*, 30-31 May 1919.

[109] *Ibid.*, 30 May 1919, 3-4 June 1919, 9 June 1919, 11 June 1919.

The collapse of the general strike in Winnipeg and other prairie cities ended any chance the O.B.U. might have had of gaining mass support in Saskatchewan. In August Regina's unionists voted by a wide margin to retain their affiliation with the T.L.C., and Joseph Sambrook and the other members of the executive who espoused the doctrine of "industrial unionism" promptly resigned. The O.B.U. enjoyed some success organizing railway workers in Kamsack, Watrous, Humboldt, North Battleford and other towns, but by 1921 even these O.B.U. strongholds had begun to return to the fold of the international craft unions. A brief incursion into the Souris coal fields in the summer of 1920 resulted in the O.B.U. organizer being forcibly evicted from the area by a local vigilante committee. A few O.B.U. units struggled on, but its force was spent.[113] For most Saskatchewan workingmen, the task of earning a living in a period of unemployment and uncertainty seemed more important than the radical rhetoric of the O.B.U.

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[110] *Ibid.*, 29-30 May 1919, 4 June 1919.

[111] *Ibid.*, 28 May 1919, 31 May 1919.

[112] *Guide*, 25 June 1919.

Saskatchewan farmers also found the readjustment to peacetime conditions difficult. High wheat prices during the war had ensured a profit even when crops were poor, as they had been in 1918. In the months following the Armistice there was a good deal of unease as to what the future would hold for the western grain grower. Of most immediate concern was the Union Government's apparent determination to return the grain trade to private hands. Believing that this would result in a calamitous drop in grain prices, the provincial Legislature and the S.G.G.A. joined with other farm organizations in appealing to Ottawa to set a fixed price for the 1919 crop as the United States government had done.[114] Futures trading did reopen on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange on 21 July, but the erratic speculative activity which followed quickly convinced the federal government that its action had been premature. At the end of the month it decided to continue to market the farmers' grain, for another crop year at least, but through a new organization, the Canada Wheat Board. It was given the same monopolistic powers of purchase and sale that the Board of Grain Supervisors had enjoyed. Rather than buying and selling at fixed prices as its predecessor had done, though, the Wheat Board paid the farmer on delivery an "initial payment" which amounted to $2.15 per bushel for the top grade of wheat. The farmer also received a participation certificate which entitled him to a proportionate share of the total net proceeds of the crop. This was to be distributed in the form of a "final payment" at the end of the crop year.[115]

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[113] Cherwinski, "Organized Labour in Saskatchewan," pp. 89-98, 160-63.

[114] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1919, pp. 86-92; *Journals*, 1918-1919, p. 81.

The high prices that farmers received from the Wheat Board -- as much as $2.63 per bushel in initial and final payments -- were all the more welcome in Saskatchewan because in 1919 the crops on the average were among the poorest in the history of the province.[116] Drought, excessive hail and a severe infestation of grasshoppers reduced the average yield to just 8.5 bushels per acre, and only 89,993,685 bushels of wheat were harvested, less even than in 1918.

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[115] Fowke, pp. 170-73; R. Graham, *Arthur Meighen*, Vol. II: *And Fortune Fled* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Company, 1963), pp. 131-33.

[116] *Agriculture Report*, 1920, p. 9.

It was only on account of continued high prices that the total estimated value of Saskatchewan's agricultural production in 1919 surpassed that of the previous year. The drought was far worse than it had been in 1914 or 1918, both in its severity and in the extent of the area affected. Southeastern Saskatchewan, along the Manitoba and United States borders, was hard hit, as was most of the western part of the province. In the southwest, around Swift Current, farmers suffered their fourth successive crop failure.[117] When a delegation from the area, led by the local M.L.A., D. J. Sykes, met with the provincial cabinet in July to request assistance, they reported that 75 per cent of the farmers in the area had no crop, not even seed or feed.[118]

For the third time in six years the provincial government was obliged to take steps to alleviate hardship in dried-out areas of Saskatchewan. Arrangements were made to have fodder shipped in free of charge, with the railways and the provincial and federal governments sharing the costs equally. The provincial Bureau of Labour attempted to secure work for farmers to help them over the winter, and co-operated with various women's organizations to collect clothing which was then distributed to needy families. Seed grain, flour and coal were also distributed, on a loan basis.[119] In all, more than 15,000 families were given aid in one form or another during the winter of 1919-1920, at a total cost to the provincial treasury of $3,284,400. This was a large sum, but the government felt it had no apologies to make for providing such assistance. As the Minister of Agriculture put it:

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[117] *Ibid.*, pp. 12-17, 25; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to R. S. Wells, 21 July 1919, p. 16291.

[118] *Leader*, 12 July 1919.

> Outside of the economic importance of keeping these people and their animals alive during the winter and spring and making possible the resumption on their part of agricultural production, the government thought that the credit of the province should be extended to tide these people over an exceedingly distressing condition which might never again be duplicated in the history of the province.[120]

These recurring crop failures in southwestern Saskatchewan also prompted the provincial government to sponsor a "Better Farming Conference" at Swift Current during the summer of 1920. Nearly 2,000 delegates attended the three-day gathering to hear agricultural experts from the provincial and federal governments, the C.P.R. and several American states advocate improved tillage practices, the raising of livestock and irrigation as possible solutions to the problems which farmers had experienced in the southwest. At the end of its deliberations, the Conference recommended that a royal commission be appointed to conduct a more thorough investigation of the situation.[121] The Martin government was quick to comply, and on 23 August a royal commission headed by Professor W. J. Rutherford, Dean of the College of Agriculture at Saskatoon, was appointed to conduct a full study.[122] This "Better Farming Commission", as it was popularly known, visited state agricultural colleges and experimental stations in Minnesota, North Dakota, Wisconsin and Illinois, and held public hearings in twelve southwestern Saskatchewan communities during the fall of 1920. In their report, which was made public early in 1921, Dean Rutherford and his colleagues concluded that the greater part of the region was good farming land, but that portions unfit for grain growing should be converted into community grazing lands for cattle, and the farmers assisted in relocating elsewhere.[123] The wheel had come full circle. In 1909 all of the short grass country between Moose Jaw and Calgary, the most arid portion of the western plains, had been opened for homesteading by the Department of the Interior. Settlers had poured in, and, for a few years, had managed to harvest good crops. Now, a little over a decade later, it had to be admitted that much of the land ought to have remained unploughed.

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[119] *Ibid.*, 21 July 1919, 8 October 1919, 29 October 1919; *Agriculture Report,* 1920, pp. 59-62, 379-80.

[120] *Leader,* 12 June 1920.

[121] *Ibid.*, 7-9 July 1920.

Crop conditions did improve somewhat in the southwest in 1920, as they did elsewhere across the province. The harvest was better too -- 113,135,774 bushels -- but returns were lower, for by the fall of 1920 the postwar inflationary boom had collapsed.[124] The consequences of deflation and depression were aggravated on the prairies by a slump in agricultural prices that accompanied the federal government's decision to abolish the Wheat Board at the end of the 1919-1920 crop year. Western farmers had come to regard the continuation of compulsory marketing through the Board as a guarantee that they would continue to enjoy high prices, and be able to pay the interest and principal on the debts which rapid wartime expansion had encouraged them to incur for the purchase of land and machinery. They desperately hoped that the Board would remain in operation, but established opinion prevailed and the grain trade was returned to private hands in August 1920.[125] There then began a drastic and continued decline in the price of wheat which reached near crisis proportions by the end of 1921. The average monthly cash price for No. 1 Northern on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange dipped under $2.00 for the first time in four years in November 1920. A year later it had fallen to $1.08.[126]

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[122] *Ibid.*, 25 August 1920. The other members of the royal commission were John Bracken, President of the Manitoba College of Agriculture; H. O. Powell, Manager of the Weyburn Security Bank; Neil McTaggart, a Gull Lake farmer and George Spence, M.L.A. for Notukeu.

[123] Saskatchewan, *Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry Into Farming Conditions* (Regina: King's Printer, 1921), pp. 40-45.

Saskatchewan was still dangerously dependent on a single staple crop. When that crop was a poor one, as it had been in 1918 and 1919, or when prices fell, as they did after the Wheat Board was abolished, then the whole province was bound to suffer. The remedy lay in securing a more diversified balance in what was still a pioneer agricultural economy, as the Grain Markets Commission had pointed out as early as 1914.[127] It had been lost sight of during the war years, when every effort had been directed toward encouraging the production of as much wheat as possible. With the return of peace in 1918 the Martin government was not slow to recognize that diversification was the key to ending the cycle of boom and bust, and it sought in a number of ways to promote mixed farming and the development of Saskatchewan's nonagricultural resources.

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[124] *Agriculture Report*, 1921, pp. 9, 17, 22, 30-34.

[125] Fowke, p. 173; Graham, Vol. II, p. 134.

[126] Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *The Canada Year Book*, 1921 (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1922), p. 264.

Low cost agricultural credit had long been recognized as one means of encouraging more diversified farming operations in Saskatchewan. On the eve of the 1917 provincial election a government agency, the Farm Loan Board, had been created for this purpose. Once the Liberals had been returned to office, the Board had begun accepting applications for loans.[128] The act creating the Farm Loan Board stipulated that the government would advance money to the Board for administration and working capital. No interest was charged on funds advanced for administration, although all funds advanced were to be repaid.[129] The Board was not given even an initial grant to establish itself, for, as the Provincial Treasurer later explained, that would have given it an unfair advantage over existing companies and

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[127] *Supra,* pp. 209-10.

[128] *Leader,* 25 April 1917, 14 July 1917.

> It was not intended that the people of this province should be taxed for the purpose of providing cheaper money for the farmers, but it was considered sound to place the credit of the province behind the greatest industry we have in an attempt to secure cheap money for that industry.[130]

The government had originally anticipated that when the Board had been advanced $5,000,000 it would become self-sustaining. Revenues in the form of interest would, it was believed, then be sufficient to enable the Board to loan money to farmers without any further advances from the provincial treasury.[131] An amendment to the Act in 1917 had increased the amount to be advanced to $10,000,000, and it was increased against in 1920 to $15,000,000.[132] When the limit was raised a second time, all hope that the Board would soon become self-sustaining was abandoned.[133]

During the war years the government had experienced difficulties in providing the Farm Loan Board with money to lend.

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[129] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 7 Geo. V, Chapter 25, secs. 21-24.

[130] *Budget Speech*, 27 January 1920, p. 17.

[131] S. J. Green, "The Origin and Operations of the Saskatchewan Farm Loan Board, 1917-1951" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1951), p. 59.

[132] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 8 Geo. V, Chapter 65; 11 Geo. V, Chapter 55.

[133] *Budget Speech*, 31 January 1922, p. 16.

Because the money markets of the world were practically closed for all but purely war loans, the Provincial Treasurer had turned to the people of Saskatchewan. Ten-year provincial bonds, known as Greater Production Bonds, were offered for sale in denominations of from $20 to $1,000, bearing interest of 5 per cent per annum, with the proceeds to be used to finance the farm loan scheme. The idea was simplicity itself, or so it seemed: the government would borrow from Saskatchewan investors to lend to Saskatchewan farmers.[134]

The first Greater Production Loan was launched with a flourish in September 1917. Arrangements were made with the Saskatchewan Press Association, representing the newspapers of the province, to handle the publicity, and every municipal secretary-treasurer was appointed an agent for the bonds. Prominent organizations such as the S.G.G.A. also gave their support.[135] By December some $800,000 had been raised. This was a substantial sum, but it could not begin to meet the demand for loans, which by the end of the year amounted to more than $6,000,000. More money might well have been secured from Saskatchewan investors, but the government had withdrawn its active publicity campaign in October so as not to interfere with the 1917 Victory Loan drive.[136]

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[134] *Leader,* 19 September 1917.

[135] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to village councillors, 15 September 1917, p. 20583; *Daily Post,* 19 September 1917; *Leader,* 22 September 1917, 25 September 1917.

[136] *Leader,* 14 December 1917.

The tremendous success of the three Victory Loan campaigns in Saskatchewan proved that the people of the province did have money to invest, and in 1920 the Provincial Treasurer launched a second campaign to sell $3,500,000 worth of Farm Loan Bonds. The assistance of the Saskatchewan Press Association was again enlisted in a six-week advertising campaign, and the S.G.G.A. and S.A.R.M. were urged to support the drive for funds.[137] The public response to the campaign proved to be extremely disappointing. Total sales in the first month amounted to only $240,000. Letters from agents for the bonds across the province expressed approval and support, but reported that poor crops, or low prices, or both were preventing farmers from investing in the scheme.[138] In fact, as the Provincial Treasurer told the 1921 S.G.G.A. convention, the advertising campaign produced four times as many applications for loans as for the purchase of bonds.[139]

Not only was the government unable to secure sufficient funds for its farm loan scheme, but the Board also experienced difficulties in making collections. In its first full year of operations, 80 per cent of the total interest due by farmers to the Board was paid, and in 1919, notwithstanding the adverse crop conditions, 58 per cent was collected. For the next two years only 46 and 37 per cent, respectively, were collected.[140] The difficulties experienced by the Board in making collections were partly the result of its own lending policies. Because existing mortgage companies had been reluctant to make loans in more recently settled districts, the Board had followed a positive policy of lending in these districts and of establishing new farmers.[141] Poor crops and the decline in grain prices after the Wheat Board was abolished doubtless forced many of them to default before they had had a chance to establish themselves. Nevertheless, the Farm Loan Board did enjoy some success in providing competition for existing lending agencies. By 1920 average interest rates to farmers had fallen from 8 per cent to 7 per cent in some districts of the province.[142] Even this modest achievement proved to be shortlived. The government's inability to sell more bonds and the difficulties experienced in making collections forced a suspension of the Board's lending activities on first mortgage early in 1921.[143] Thus ended, temporarily at least, Saskatchewan's experiment in providing "cheap money" to its farmers.

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[137] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to J. B. Musselman, 15 September 1920, p. 20775; Dunning to E. G. Hingley, 18 September 1920, pp. 20723-25; *Leader*, 2 October 1920.

[138] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to J. W. Ward, 22 November 1920, pp. 20894-95. The Provincial Treasurer had not expected to sell the whole $3,500,000 worth of Farm Loan Bonds during the six-week advertising campaign. The municipal secretary-treasurers appointed as agents were to be permanent agents and the bonds were to be on sale continuously.

[139] *Leader*, 3 February 1921.

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[140] *Budget Speech*, 31 January 1922, p. 17.

[141] *Ibid.*, 29 January 1919, p. 11.

[142] *Ibid.*, 27 January 1920, p. 17.

In other ways, too, the Martin government attempted to encourage the diversification of the Saskatchewan economy after the war. A thorough investigation into the extent and value of the natural resources of the province was promised in the Speech from the Throne opening the second postwar session of the Legislature,[144] and the government subsequently brought down legislation creating a Bureau of Labour and Industries for this purpose. In moving second reading of the bill, C. A. Dunning explained that the activities of the Bureau of Labour, created in 1911 as a branch of the Department of Agriculture, had expanded with the growth of the province. It was now felt that its scope should be enlarged to include the investigation and promotion of the commercial development of Saskatchewan's natural wealth. Dunning took great pains to emphasize that the government did not intend to go out prospecting, for under existing federal regulations any discoveries would quickly be acquired by speculators. Instead the new Bureau would carefully analyze the known resources of the province and bring these resources to the attention of any company capable of developing them. This would ensure that the benefits of industrial development accrued to the people of Saskatchewan. As an illustration of what could be done, he pointed to the recent discovery of an estimated 4,000,000 tons of sodium sulphate in the southwestern part of the province. Already a number of paper mills in Canada had written for information concerning this deposit. Saskatchewan also possessed valuable clay deposits, and he hoped to see these developed in the future as well. The bill was approved without discussion,[145] and the new Bureau of Labour and Industries set to work.

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[143] Green, p. 69.

[144] *Journals*, 1919-1920, p. 9.

During the summer Dunning gave the public a more complete outline of the work to be performed by the Bureau. The government and the Legislature had come to the conclusion, he told a meeting of the Saskatoon Board of Trade, that the old policy of waiting for Saskatchewan's natural resources to be transferred to provincial control should be replaced by a policy of preparation for the time when the transfer actually took place. In creating the new Bureau, the government had three aims in mind: to encourage the industrial development of known resources, rather than exploration; to investigate the practicability of every industry which might appear feasible because of the presence of raw materials or other favourable conditions and to undertake advertising as development progressed, with a view to encouraging the people of Saskatchewan to make use of the products of local industries.[146]

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[145] *Leader*, 16 January 1920; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 10 Geo. V, Chapter 56.

[146] *Leader*, 15 May 1920.

The first industry the government proposed to survey was the clay industry. A growing province required many buildings, and if the brick to build them could be obtained locally, then the heavy freight charges for imported materials could be saved.[147] A series of laboratory experiments were undertaken for the Bureau to determine the suitability of Saskatchewan clays for the manufacture of brick, chinaware and other products. A course in ceramics was introduced at the University of Saskatchewan and a ceramics engineer was secured to advise the Bureau.[148] The Bureau also devoted special attention to the large sodium sulphate deposits which had recently been discovered in the province, deposits so large that it was estimated Saskatchewan could supply world demands for a hundred years. There was a danger that excessive competition among producers might drive prices down to uneconomic levels. To prevent this the Bureau attempted to convince the various companies developing the deposits to come together in some form of orderly marketing arrangement.[149]

The major thrust of the Martin government's efforts to stimulate industrial growth during these years lay in the direction of encouraging the commercial development of the immense deposits of lignite coal in the Estevan-Bienfait area. Through the Lignite Utilization Board, created in 1918, Saskatchewan was co-operating with the Manitoba and federal governments in the erection and operation of an experimental lignite briquetting plant at Bienfait. Preliminary tests showed that two tons of lignite could be converted into one ton of briquettes with approximately the same heating value as a similar quantity of anthracite coal. In 1920 the three governments proceeded to build a full scale commercial plant with a capacity of 30,000 tons of briquettes per year. Construction was completed in 1921, and the progress of the experimental work encouraged the hope that a successful process for briquetting Saskatchewan lignite would soon be found.[150]

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[147] *Ibid.*, 9 June 1920.

[148] *Ibid.*, 9 February 1921; Saskatchewan, Bureau of Labour and Industries, *Annual Report*, 1921, pp. 14-16; *Annual Report*, 1922 (Regina: King's Printer, 1922), pp. 18-22.

[149] *Leader*, 24 November 1920.

Before the war the government of Saskatchewan and, it may safely be said, the vast majority of its residents too, had shown little interest in the province's vast northern hinterland. Settlement had not advanced far beyond the Park Belt by 1914. The expanse of forests, lakes and muskegs that lay north of Prince Albert seemed unattractive, especially when compared to the fertile lands of Alberta's Peace River district. Saskatchewan moved rather more slowly than Alberta to investigate and develop the hitherto untapped mineral resources of its north country.[151] Not until 1920 did the government at Regina begin to take the first steps in this direction. In the summer of that year the Bureau of Labour and Industries despatched an exploration party to examine coal deposits rumoured to exist in the Lac la Ronge area. The party was composed of A. C. Garner, chief surveyor for the provincial Land Titles Office, E. Pierce, provincial mines inspector and B. L. Thorne, a geologist. They left Prince Albert on 3 August and spent over a month in the north country. Coal was discovered, but it was similar in quality to the lignite found in southern Saskatchewan, and in any event the deposit was located far distant from any transportation facilities.[152] The following summer another party visited the Lac la Ronge area for two months to gather more information on the mineral resources there.[153] These were modest beginnings. There were no dramatic discoveries in the north country, but the activities of the Bureau of Labour and Industries did make the public more conscious of the mineral wealth which would one day form the foundation for a more complete development of the Saskatchewan economy.

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[150] Saskatchewan, Bureau of Labour and Industries, *Annual Report*, 1921, p. 13; *Annual Report*, 1922, pp. 14-16.

[151] M. Zaslow, *The Opening of the Canadian North, 1870-1914* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1971), pp. 210-23; D. P. Fitzgerald, "Pioneer Settlement in Northern Saskatchewan" (unpublished

In all of these activities the Martin government encountered

Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1966), Part I, pp. 131-56.

[152] *Leader*, 30 July 1920, 9 October 1920; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, "Lac la Ronge District Saskatchewan" (report prepared by B. L. Thorne), pp. 14620-24.

[153] *Leader*, 17 December [illegible]921.

little if any criticism or opposition, either from its political foes in the Legislature, or from the public at large. The same could not be said of its efforts to enforce the Saskatchewan Temperance Act. Here Premier Martin and his colleagues found themselves engulfed in controversy almost from the day the war ended, as evidence of dissatisfaction with prohibition became more and more apparent in the province. The Martin government found itself caught in the middle, between those who demanded more vigorous enforcement of the law, and those who wished to see the province return to some form of legalized sale of wine, beer and spirits.

Of most immediate concern to the government and to prohibitionists at war's end was the brazen flouting of the law by some doctors and druggists in the province. Prohibitionist groups such as the Presbyterian Synod of Saskatchewan were quick to accuse the government of laxity in enforcing the Saskatchewan Temperance Act, and demanded that the will of the people be carried out with greater vigour.[154] The lot of the honest doctor or druggist was not made any easier by the activities of those of their colleagues who were unscrupulously selling liquor to any and all who asked for it. By November 1919 the Saskatchewan Pharmaceutical Association had reached the conclusion that the right to sell liquor for medicinal purposes should be taken away from druggists altogether, and appealed to the government to amend the law accordingly.[155]

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[154] *Ibid.*, 6 November 1919.

Accusations of lax enforcement of the Temperance Act and appeals by the druggists to take them out of the liquor business did not fall on deaf ears. The government took steps during the 1919-1920 session of the Legislature to strengthen the prohibition law. Framing the new legislation proved to be no easy matter, even with the assistance of the executive of the Saskatchewan Social Service Council, which met with the cabinet early in January.[156] It was not until late in the session, on 22 January, that the Attorney-General introduced the amendments to the Saskatchewan Temperance Act. These amendments placed more stringent restrictions on the sale of liquor for medicinal purposes by physicians and druggists, established a commission, to be known as the Saskatchewan Liquor Commission, which would have full control over all liquor brought into the province for medicinal, sacramental and commercial purposes and made provision for the appointment of a Director of Prosecutions to aid in the enforcement of the law.[157] At the same time the government also took advantage of the recent amendment to the Canada Temperance Act, which made it illegal to ship beverage alcohol into any province that voted to forbid the importation or sale of liquor, and introduced a resolution requesting Ottawa to hold such a referendum in Saskatchewan. The resolution passed without a single dissenting vote,[158] but the amendments to the Temperance Act did not receive the same unanimous approval.

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[155] *Ibid.*, 7 November 1919.

[156] *Ibid.*, 9 January 1920, 19 January 1920.

[157] *Journals*, 1919-1920, p. 97; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 10 Geo. V, Chapter 70.

Turgeon admitted to the House that the government had learned from experience that there was no panacea or final solution to the complex liquor problem, but asserted that the proposed amendments were "about as good ... as we can possibly devise." He took great pains to refute accusations that the government was enforcing the prohibition law in a half-hearted manner. Since it had come into effect, he told the House, there had been 1,803 prosecutions for infractions of the Saskatchewan Temperance Act, and 1,596 convictions had been secured. Fully four-fifths of the time of the Saskatchewan Provincial Police had been devoted to enforcing prohibition, and the annual cost of policing in the province had more than doubled, from $114,000 to $350,000, since 1917. The principal difficulty in the way of enforcement remained, as ever, the indifference of the general public towards the prohibition law:

> How can you expect absolute perfection when so great a majority think it is perfectly right and legitimate to take a drink? If our law is going to be a success, and we want it to be a success, we must first create a new public conscience. That is the real problem ....

Still, the government was confident that it was following the wishes of the great majority of the people of Saskatchewan in providing for stricter control of the use of liquor for sacramental, medicinal or manufacturing purposes, and at the same time giving them an opportunity to vote on the question of excluding all forms of beverage alcohol from the province.[159]

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[158] *Journals*, 1919-1920, pp. 109-10.

This confidence was not shared by some members of the Opposition, or even by some Liberal back-benchers. The Leader of the Opposition, Donald Maclean, claimed that prohibition had proved to be "a mockery and a farce." It had filled the jails and brought the law into contempt, and he predicted that the only effect of the proposed amendments would be to increase bootlegging. Any hope of enforcing prohibition had evaporated once the war ended. He challenged the Liberals to face reality and frame legislation that would command public support, something which the existing law had demonstrably failed to do, as even the Attorney-General himself had admitted. As an alternative, the Conservative leader suggested that one or two supply houses be established under government control from which liquor could be purchased by mail order.

Harris Turner was another who criticized the proposed amendments. Like Maclean, he expressed the belief that conditions would be worse under the government's new legislation than if the legal sale of liquor was permitted. J. A. MacMillan, the Liberal M.L.A. for Wadena, declared that he too was "diametrically opposed" to the bill, claiming it could never be enforced. Such opinions as these were still very much in the minority in the Legislature. When the amendments to the Saskatchewan Temperance Act came up for second reading, they were approved by a vote of 40 - 6. As might have been expected, the division did not follow strict party lines. Three of the six who voted against the amendments were Liberals, two were Conservatives and the other, Harris Turner, an Independent.[160] The bill encountered no further opposition, and became law in due course, but its implementation was delayed until the outcome of the referendum on importation became known.

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[159] *Leader*, 30 January 1920.

The federal authorities fixed 25 October 1920 as the date of polling. Temperance organizations across Saskatchewan mobilized their forces to secure a favourable majority in the referendum, but the unity that had been displayed during the campaign to abolish the dispensaries in 1916 proved difficult to maintain in peacetime. While the W.C.T.U., the W.G.G.A. and the Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist Churches again threw themselves wholeheartedly into the struggle, the Roman Catholic and German Lutheran Churches remained silent. Among Anglican clergy there were some, such as Rev. George Exton Lloyd, who took an active part in the campaign to end importation. Others, though, were indifferent and a few actually left the prohibitionist ranks and declared themselves in favour of a policy of moderation and government control. There was no organized attempt by the so-called "moderationists" to discredit prohibition, as there would be later in the decade, but those engaged in the liquor trade did wage a quiet campaign in favour of a continuation of importation. So also did the two German newspapers in the province, *Der Courier* and *St. Peters Bote*, and the *A.C.F.C.*, arguing that prohibition was a denial of personal freedom.[161]

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[160] *Journals*, 1919-1920, pp. 116-17; *Daily Post*, 31 January 1920, 2 February 1920; *Leader*, 2 February 1920.

The referendum resulted in a victory for the prohibitionists, but the "dry" majority was smaller than it had been in 1916. A total of 142,208 of the 278,930 elligible voters cast ballots on 25 October, with 86,949 voting against importation, and 56,259 in favour of it. The vote was conducted on the federal constituency boundaries, and every constituency except Prince Albert voted to end importation. Regina was the only city in the province to vote "wet", but the rural vote gave the prohibitionists a majority of 400 overall in that riding.[162]

A majority of over 31,000 in favour of a ban on importation seemed conclusive to prohibitionists, but not to some members of the provincial government. On the night of the vote, when incomplete returns showed the majority to be only about 10,000, George Langley had declared that the result was inadequate and would make enforcement of the law a doubtful matter.[163] The government also expressed regret at the small turnout of voters in the Speech from the Throne opening the fall session of the Legislature a few weeks later.[164] Premier Martin warned that prohibition could not be properly enforced without a greater measure of public support, but assured the Legislature that his government would do its best to carry out the expressed wishes of the people.[165]

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[161] Pinno, pp. 148-64; Huel, "A.C.F.C.", pp. 160-61.

[162] *The Canada Gazette*, Vol. LIV, No. 27, 1 January 1921, p. 2644.

[163] *Daily Post*, 26 October 1920.

This did not satisfy some prohibitionists whose ire had been aroused by what they regarded as the government's belittling of the size of the referendum vote. Rev. Hugh Dobson, a prominent Methodist, was quick to remind the government that the vote had been the second largest ever polled in any provincial election or referendum. The turnout on 25 October had been even more remarkable, he argued, because the referendum had been held in the midst of the busy harvest season, and there had been no active opponent visibly active to stir up a spirit of contest.[166] Rev. W. P. Reekie, general secretary of the Social Service Council and a staunch Baptist, was even more outspoken. The people had expressed themselves in a democratic vote, he told the Council's annual convention in Regina, and yet there was some doubt as to whether their wishes would be respected. Indeed he wondered aloud whether the voters'

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[164] *Journals*, 1920, p. 8.

[165] *Leader*, 10 November 1920.

[166] *Ibid.*, 23 November 1920.

"solemn decisions" would continue to be "flouted and frustrated by wealthy and lawless rum runners."[167] Reekie's criticisms did not go unanswered. Speaking for the government, the Attorney-General denied that its attitude on the liquor question had changed, or that it contemplated holding another referendum in the near future. With the implementation of the amendments to the Saskatchewan Temperance Act approved during the previous session, and the banning of further imports from outside the province, Saskatchewan was about to embark on a new phase of liquor control, and it would be given a fair trial.[168]

There seems little doubt that the Martin government was sincere in its pledges to enforce the Saskatchewan Temperance Act in accordance with the expressed wishes of the people of the province, but these pledges were not to be easily or quickly fulfilled. Prohibition remained difficult to enforce, in part at least because the restrictions imposed by the provincial and federal governments were not complete. Although it was illegal to purchase alcohol for any but commercial, sacramental or medicinal purposes, it was not illegal to ship liquor from Saskatchewan to provinces which still permitted importation. During the war a number of firms, popularly known as "export houses", had been established in the province solely for the purpose of supplying liquor to customers in Manitoba and Alberta. The wartime ban on all interprovincial trade in liquor had dried up the source of supply for these "export houses", but with the lapsing of this ban at the end of 1919, and with the advent of national prohibition in the United States the following year, they began to do a thriving business with Saskatchewan's thirsty American neighbours. The referendum vote on 25 October meant that these firms would be prevented from obtaining further supplies, although not from disposing of the very large stocks which they already had on hand.

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[167] *Daily Post*, 23 November 1920.

[168] *Leader*, 11 December 1920.

The Martin government looked on helplessly as these warehouses, said to number nearly 60 by 1920,[169] carried on their profitable though illicit business. Most of these establishments were located in villages and towns close to the American border, the better to serve rum runners smuggling liquor into the United States in defiance of its prohibition laws. Not all of the liquor in these export warehouses found its way south. A thriving local trade also developed, which gave rise to considerable disorder and lawlessness in Estevan and other border towns, and prompted the Legislature to urge the federal authorities to declare the traffic illegal and put an end to the export liquor business.[170] In January 1921 the Social Service Council of Saskatchewan issued a similar appeal. These warehouses not only violated the laws of a neighbouring country, it declared, but served to supply bootleggers operating locally and therefore ought to be eradicated at once as "a most urgent public duty."[171] Ottawa took no action on these requests and the "export houses" continued to do a brisk business. After the ban on importation went into effect on 1 February 1921, their numbers began to decline, to 35 by mid-March, but it was widely believed that those which were left had sufficient stock to continue operating for another two or three years at least.[172]

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[169] *C.A.R.*, 1920, p. 795.

[170] *Journals*, 1920, pp. 31-32; *Leader*, 17 November 1920.

For Saskatchewan, then, postwar reconstruction had not, as Premier Martin had so confidently predicted in 1918, simply meant "the beginning of our development again at the point where we left off when war began." In many respects the old order had vanished beyond recovery, and new problems and new responsibilities faced the government of the day. In enforcing prohibition, repairing the ravages of drought or promoting agricultural diversification and the development of Saskatchewan's natural resources, Premier Martin and the Liberals were finding that there were no quick or easy solutions.

As long as even a few of the "export houses" remained to supply local bootleggers, public dissatisfaction with the Saskatchewan Temperance Act could only be expected to increase, yet Regina had already twice attempted, unsuccessfully as it had turned out, to legislate these establishments out of existence. In setting up its farm loan scheme, the government had anticipated that the Farm Loan Board would become a regular mortgage lending agency established on sound business principles, self-sustaining after a limited period and a possible source of revenue to the province. After four years of operation none of these hopes had been realized. So too with the exploration parties despatched to northern Saskatchewan. They had aroused interest in the region, but little more, and even these modest efforts to encourage the development of the province's mineral wealth were soon to be abandoned.[173] Overshadowing these rather prosaic matters was another of far greater urgency to Saskatchewan's Liberal regime. There was a new political militancy evident among the organized farmers at war's end, and as the slump of 1920 deepened into the depression of 1921 there seemed every likelihood that this wave of farmer insurgency would sweep away the party and the government which had ruled the province since its inception.

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[171] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, "Export Liquor Warehouses in Saskatchewan" (Statement issued by Social Service Council of Saskatchewan, January 1921), pp. 50080-82.

[172] *C.A.R.*, 1922, p. 795; Pinno, p. 170.

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[173] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, J. G. Gardiner to Dunning, 25 May 1922, pp. 15082-83.

CHAPTER VII

THE FARMERS IN POLITICS, 1919-1922

In every part of rural Canada west of the Ottawa Valley farmers were deserting the old parties in 1919 and 1920 for a new political organization of their own creation. Filled with a crusading zeal based on a profound sense of injustice, their avowed goal was no less than the replacement of existing governments, both federal and provincial, with administrations more receptive to the demands of the agricultural community. It was a prospect which the old party politicians in Regina or Winnipeg or Ottawa could scarcely regard with equanimity. Farmers' governments did come to power in Ontario, and in Alberta and Manitoba. Saskatchewan, on the other hand, proved to be an exception. In that province the government remained solidly Liberal, though the threat of the farmers' political movement was to challenge all the ingenuity and resourcefulness of two Liberal Premiers before it was finally overcome.

The explanation of the Liberals' rather remarkable survival in Saskatchewan is to be found, in part at least, in the close association which had developed over the years between the government and the Grain Growers. Successive Liberal administrations had lost no opportunity to retain the favour of the province's powerful farm organization. The presence of prominent Grain Growers such as George Langley and "Charlie" Dunning in Liberal cabinets had assured Saskatchewan farmers of a sympathetic consideration of their wishes. Resolutions adopted at annual S.G.G.A. conventions had quickly found their way into the statute books of the province, and government policies had generally followed the lines advocated by the organized farmers. The sudden appearance of the Nonpartisan League, with its frank appeal to agrarian class consciousness, had threatened for a time to destroy the comfortable relationship with the organized farmers which had served the Liberals so well in Saskatchewan. Although the Nonpartisan League had failed to dislodge the government in 1917, the lesson was not lost on Premier Martin or his successor. In the face of a much more serious threat to their continued dominance of provincial politics after the war, Saskatchewan Liberals were to show an even greater solicitude for the wishes of the organized farmers.

This close association between the government and the Grain Growers had also served to enhance the reputations of that group of men who had come to dominate the highest echelons of organized agriculture in Saskatchewan, and they, no less than the Liberals, were determined to preserve it for their own benefit. These farm leaders -- J. A. Maharg, J. B. Musselman, A. G. Hawkes, Thomas Sales, John Evans and H. C. Fleming -- had found a power base in the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. Its phenomenal success, success that was due in no small degree to the solid financial support provided by the Liberal government at Regina, ensured that their views would carry great weight within the ranks of the farm movement in Saskatchewan.[1] Maharg, Musselman and Hawkes were the most powerful and influential members of this group. Allan Gardner Hawkes was the oldest of the three. He had been born in England in 1861 and homesteaded near Broadview in 1886. One of the first farmers in his district to join the T.G.G.A., Hawkes had soon begun to rise through the ranks of the farmers' organization. He became a director of the S.G.G.A. in 1906 and was chosen as one of the first directors of the Saskatchewan "Co-op" at its founding convention in July 1911. Thereafter he held office in both organizations, succeeding C. A. Dunning as vice-president of the S.G.G.A. in 1919.[2]

John Archibald Maharg's rise to prominence in the farmers' movement was even more impressive. He was a native of Ontario and, like Hawkes, had come west to homestead, near Moose Jaw, in 1890. He became a successful farmer and livestock breeder, and represented his "local" as a delegate at the 1907 "farmers' parliament" in Regina. After one term as a district director, Maharg was elected president of the S.G.G.A. in 1911. That same year he was chosen to head the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. In addition to these responsibilities, Maharg was to take a leading role in the formation of a distinct farmers' party. He was one of three supporters of the "Farmers' Platform" elected to Parliament from

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[1] Courville, pp. 107-109.

[2] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1906, p. 35; 1914, p. 2; *Guide*, 19 July 1911, 14 November 1917.

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Saskatchewan as Unionist candidates in 1917, and one of the first to join T. A. Crerar on the cross benches after the latter's celebrated resignation from the Union Government in June 1919.[3]

John B. Musselman seems to have been the least successful of the three as a farmer. He had come from Ontario to homestead near Cupar in 1902 and, like the others, soon found his way into the farmers' movement. Musselman was elected a director of the S.G.G.A. in 1912, and of the Saskatchewan "Co-op" the following year. He continued to farm only until 1914, when he found his true calling as secretary of the S.G.G.A.[4] Together with Thomas Sales, John Evans and H. C. Fleming, they had come by 1919 to occupy six of the nine seats on the Board of the 21,000-member Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company. All but one were also members of the executive of the S.G.G.A., which represented approximately 35,000 of the province's farmers by this time.[5] The Grain Growers controlled the political destinies of the province, and it was this "interlocking directorate," firmly entrenched in power, which controlled the farmers' organization.

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[3] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1910, p. 2, 1911, p. 3; Saskatchewan Historical Society Clipping Files [hereafter cited as S.H.S. Files]; *Guide*, 19 July 1911; W. L. Morton, *Progressive Party*, pp. 58, 67-69, 96.

[4] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Reports*, 1912, p. 2; S.H.S. Files; *Leader*, 20 November 1913.

[5] Courville, p. 109; Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, *Delegate's Handbook, 1919* (Regina: n.p., 1919), p. 11; AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1920, p. 52.

By November 1918, when the Canadian Council of Agriculture renewed its demands for tariff reductions with the publication of the "New National Policy," Saskatchewan farmers had lost faith in both of the national parties and were disposed to strike out on their own. The sentiment for direct participation in politics was strongest among the rank and file of the Grain Growers; the executive, and particularly J. B. Musselman, were less enthusiastic. It was Musselman who was to play the leading role in directing the farmers' political movement in the province. When the Grain Growers' Board of Directors met in December 1918 to discuss the growing agitation among farmers for independent political action, most were of the opinion that the S.G.G.A. should create a political organization at once. Musselman alone disagreed, and warned of the perils of using the name and the organization of the S.G.G.A. for political purposes. By the time of the annual convention in February 1919, Musselman was later to recall, he "became fully persuaded that the demand for action by the association was so popular that there was no withstanding it and decided to attempt to guide the movement along sane and rational lines rather than to oppose it."[6]

The 1919 "farmers' parliament" promised to be of more than ordinary significance, both for the future of Saskatchewan politics and for the S.G.G.A., whose membership had come to embrace one out of every three of the province's farmers. It proved to be the largest convention in the history of the Association, with more than 2,000 men and women from locals across the province in attendance.[7] The Premier himself was also there, to deliver the opening address. He was careful to remind the Grain Growers that the government at Regina had at all times been responsive to their wishes. "There are questions now coming before you affecting the welfare of the entire community of the province," he told them. "It is the policy of the present government and will continue to be the policy of the present government to carry out [your] suggestions."[8]

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[6] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, J. B. Musselman to W. R. Motherwell, 17 June 1921.

Not unexpectedly, it was the question of political action which attracted the greatest interest during the four days that followed. The "New National Policy" had already been adopted as the political platform of the United Farmers of Ontario when it decided to enter the political arena in December 1918, and the organized farmers of Manitoba and Alberta had followed suit at their annual conventions a month later.[9] It received the unanimous endorsation of the Saskatchewan delegates too,[10] and a resolution was then introduced to amend the constitution so as to permit direct political action by the S.G.G.A. President J. A. Maharg spoke strongly against the resolution, declaring that he was opposed to the farmers' organization itself entering politics, but favoured independent action by Grain Growers in individual constituencies. He suggested that the convention instead pass a resolution endorsing political action in principle but leave it to the executive to work out the details, "... the resolution to be drafted in such a way as to make it absolutely sure that the Central [Board] would not be involved in political action beyond the initial calling of ... district conventions."[11] The secretary, Musselman, then took up the task of persuading the delegates to adopt such a course. In the end he was successful. The convention approved a revised motion authorizing the Central Board to call constituency conventions if 25 per cent of the locals in any federal constituency requested that a convention be held and collected a minimum of $250 to defray organization expenses. These local conventions were to be open not only to members of the S.G.G.A., but to all who supported the platform of the Canadian Council of Agriculture.[12]

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[7] QUA, G. F. Chipman Papers, Chipman to T. A. Crerar, 25 February 1919.

[8] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1919, p. 4.

[9] W. L. Morton, *Progressive Party*, pp. 63-65.

[10] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1919, pp. 64-70.

It fell to Musselman, as secretary of the S.G.G.A., to organize these constituency conventions. He first wrote to the locals, asking whether they wished only to organize district political associations at these meetings, or nominate candidates as well.[13] The response was overwhelmingly in favour of doing both. This was not what Musselman had expected or desired: if the locals proceeded to nominate candidates at these conventions, the S.G.G.A. would, in effect, become a political party. Musselman hurriedly called a meeting of the full Central Board, and "took hours" to convince his colleagues that he should try to prevent the conventions from being nominating conventions. The Board finally agreed that the new farmers' political organization should be separate, and that nominations should be delayed.[14]

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[11] *Ibid.*, p. 82.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 77-83; J. B. Musselman to W. R. Motherwell, 17 June 1921.

Conventions were held in all sixteen federal constituencies in the province during the month of June, the dates being arranged so that Musselman could attend each one. He was able to persuade the farmers in each case not to put a candidate in the field, and stage-managed the setting up of a local political organization. Some of the conventions, notably those in Moose Jaw, Wilkie and Rosetown, were stormy affairs, with delegates accusing the Central Board of using undue influence to have the nomination of candidates deferred. The meetings were well-attended, and the farmers went about the business of electing constituency executives and setting up a political organization with obvious enthusiasm.[15]

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[13] *Guide*, 19 March 1919.

[14] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, J. B. Musselman to W. R. Motherwell, 17 June 1921.

[15] *Guide*, 25 June 1919, 2 July 1919, 9 July 1919, 13 August 1919.

The resolution approved by the Grain Growers at their February convention had stipulated that a meeting of the constituency executives be called "... as soon as feasible ... for the purpose of organizing a permanent provincial committee and directing the future policy of the new political group." Such a meeting was not, however, deemed to be "feasible," ostensibly on account of an early harvest. Instead, fifteen of the constituency committee chairmen together with the S.G.G.A. executive met in Regina at the end of July. They proceeded to constitute themselves a "Provisional Provincial Committee," and elected an executive, consisting of Thomas Sales as Chairman, W. J. Orchard as Vice-Chairman, J. B. Musselman as "Secretary Pro Tem" and R. M. Johnson and Thomas Teare as members-at-large. It was decided that a convention of all executive members of the sixteen constituency committees would be held later in the year, when a permanent political organization would be established. Musselman cautioned the members of the constituency committee that it was "of course recognized that until the general meeting ... has been held no very great authority can rest in this provisional committee ..." and in the next breath informed them that it had already begun to lay plans for an organization and fund-raising drive covering the entire province.[16]

Obviously, Musselman and the others took it for granted that the permanent executive would automatically endorse the organizational structure which they had formulated. Their expectations were fulfilled when the second and larger convention took place in Regina in mid-September. Orchard, Teare and Johnson were elected to the three most important executive positions in the New National Policy Political Association, the body that was created to co-ordinate the efforts of the constituency committees in nominating and electing representatives to Parliament.[17] The N.N.P.P.A. functioned separately from the S.G.G.A., but in close harmony with it.[18] J. B. Musselman was not himself a member of the N.N.P.P.A. executive, but his close friendship with Orchard, Teare and particularly Johnson, gave him "a commanding measure of influence over its policy."[19]

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[16] AS, Violet McNaughton Papers, J. B. Musselman to all Members of Constituency Committees, 21 August 1919.

At the same time that Saskatchewan farmers were holding their local political conventions across the province, the Liberals were preparing for a national leadership convention in Ottawa to choose a successor to Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The situation was fraught with peril for western Liberals, and no one realized the need for caution more than Premier Martin. He was attempting to ride three horses at once, and by 1919 it was proving to be no easy feat. He had backed the Union Government in 1917, and continued to maintain a close personal relationship with J. A. Calder after the war, much to the annoyance of Laurier Liberals such as W. R. Motherwell.[20] The former Saskatchewan Minister of Agriculture had been anxious to see the Premier take an immediate and unequivocal stand in opposition to Union Government. By recreating the image of the selfish interests of the east as the manipulators of the Borden government, he hoped that it might be possible to contain the incipient agrarian revolt on the prairies within the Liberal party.[21] Martin could hardly fail to recognize that it was becoming increasingly awkward to be identified with the Union Government, but he apparently preferred to wait for public sentiment to harden before declaring himself.

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[17] *Guide,* 1 October 1919. The three were elected to the posts of president, vice-president and secretary, respectively.

[18] Anderson, p. 58.

[19] Courville, p. 114.

As Premier, Martin was also leader of the Saskatchewan Liberal party. In the past provincial Liberals had maintained a close working relationship with their Ottawa counterparts, and there were many in the party, of whom Motherwell was only the most outspoken, who wished to re-establish the links that had been severed in 1917. By April Martin had agreed, much to the delight of Liberals in Ottawa and Regina, to take a hand in the preparations for the national party convention later that summer.[22] He could already see that a too close association with the Ottawa Liberals might endanger his support among Saskatchewan farmers, unless the party could be reconstructed along lines that would appeal to the low tariff sentiments of the west. Thus when Martin publicly announced his resumption of the leadership of the federal Liberal party in Saskatchewan in mid-June, he made it clear that his acceptance of these added responsibilities was not without its conditions:

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[20] *Supra,* pp. 403-404; *Leader,* 28 February 1919; AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, W. R. Motherwell to Turgeon, 3 April 1919.

[21] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Martin, 10 December 1918, pp. 2066-69.

[22] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Turgeon to W. R. Motherwell, 12 April 1919; W. R. Motherwell to Turgeon, 2 July 1919.

> While I believe that a reorganized Liberal party with a progressive platform is the best medium of expression for western opinion, I do not intend nor do the people of Saskatchewan intend to slavishly follow the Liberal party or any other party. The people of this country want a clear-cut low tariff policy. They want no trimming on the question, and if the Liberal convention at Ottawa does not announce itself in unmistakable terms on this all important question, then we in this province will require to take other measures to see that we are represented by men who will at all times advocate a fiscal policy which I believe is not only in the interests of Saskatchewan but of the whole of Canada.[23]

Liberal constituency conventions were held across the province in July for the purpose of choosing Saskatchewan's delegates to the national gathering in Ottawa. The Liberal press launched a vigorous campaign for western unity within the Liberal party, appealing to the organized farmers to make common cause in the struggle for tariff reductions.[24] Efforts were made to identify with the organized farmers in other ways as well. At two of the conventions, prominent members of the S.G.G.A. were chosen as delegates or as constituency executives, in their absence and

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[23] *Leader*, 18 June 1919.

[24] *Ibid.*, 19-20 June 1919.

and without their consent.[25] These preliminaries completed, Premier Martin departed for Ottawa at the end of the month, taking with him five of his cabinet colleagues and more than twenty Liberal backbenchers.[26]

The man who headed the Saskatchewan delegation attracted more than ordinary interest in Ottawa, for he had been one of several prominent Liberals mentioned as possible successors to Laurier during the weeks and months preceding the convention.[27] In fact, though, he was never a serious candidate and could not be. For one thing, he was not as well known as the chief aspirants from the Opposition benches in Ottawa, W. S. Fielding, G. P. Graham or D. D. Mackenzie. For another, his apostasy in 1917 counted against him in the eyes of those Liberals whose loyalty to Laurier had not wavered during the war. Martin's name seems to have been put forward "chiefly because of a vague desire that the Liberal party should seek its new leader from the West."[28] In any event, the Saskatchewan Premier had disavowed any intention to run even before the convention opened.[29] Though western delegates were said to be pressing him at the last minute to reconsider his decision, Martin gave no indication that he would.[30] Apart from moving W. S. Fielding's nomination for the leadership, thereby ending all speculation that he might still become a candidate himself, Premier Martin remained inconspicuous.[31]

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[25] *Leader,* 18 July 1919; *Guide,* 30 July 1919, 20 August 1919. Both, of course, declined the honour.

[26] *Leader,* 29 July 1919, 7 August 1919.

[27] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, Turgeon to T. H. McGuire, 27 March 1919; *Leader,* 26 July 1919.

[28] R. M. Dawson, *William Lyon Mackenzie King: A Political Biography, 1874-1923* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958), p. 292.

The Ottawa convention failed to appease western feelings on the tariff, considered by Martin and indeed by all prairie Liberals to be the most important matter before the delegates. Though the tariff resolution adopted at the convention was similar to that found in the "New National Policy," it contained no specific repudiation of the principle of protection, a grave omission so far as the west was concerned. Nor did the choice of William Lyon Mackenzie King as the party's new leader give much reassurance to western voters. What was known about King on the prairies was slight: he had been an anti-conscriptionist in 1917 and had served for a time in Laurier's cabinet as Minister of Labour. Neither fact endeared him to farmers.[32] It was too little, too late, as far as the organized farmers of Ontario and the west were concerned.

Nowhere was this more apparent than in Saskatchewan, where an opportunity for the farmers' newly-created political organization to win its spurs soon presented itself. The federal constituency of Assiniboia had become vacant in September 1918 with the elevation of J. G. Turriff to the Senate. After months of hesitation the Borden government finally decided to issue writs for a by-election in the riding, and the farmers at once began preparations to put a candidate in the field. An organizer was appointed to canvass the riding, and arrangements were made to hold a nominating convention at Carlyle on 25 September.[33] By the time of the convention every polling subdivision in Assiniboia had been organized, and nearly 5,000 farmers had contributed a total of $5,791.42 to a campaign fund.[34] The Carlyle convention proved to be a large and enthusiastic affair. There were 496 delegates present, and they took nearly nine hours to select a candidate from among the sixteen who were nominated. Of these, thirteen were farmers, and it was a farmer, O. R. Gould, who was finally chosen on the fifth ballot.[35] Gould's nomination seemed tantamount to election, at least to those Saskatchewan newspapers which wholeheartedly supported the farmers' entry into politics. The convention which nominated Gould was "a truly remarkable event," the Herman paper in Regina noted with pleasure, for it showed clearly the new spirit in politics in the province. "Probably nine-tenths of the voters in Assiniboia constituency are farmers, so there is reason for the confidence which the convention seemed to feel that any candidate nominated would certainly be the next member of Parliament."[36]

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[29] *Leader*, 30-31 July 1919.

[30] *Ibid.*, 2 August 1919, 5 August 1919.

[31] *Daily Post*, 5-7 August 1919; *Leader*, 6-8 August 1919.

[32] W. L. Morton, *Progressive Party*, pp. 77-81; R. M. Dawson, pp. 298-309.

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[33] *Alameda Dispatch*, 29 August 1919; *Guide*, 3 September 1919.

[34] *Guide*, 1 October 1919, 8 October 1919.

[35] *Ibid.*, 8 October 1919, 15 October 1919.

These developments in Assiniboia complicated an already difficult situation for Liberals in Regina and Ottawa. Mackenzie King, the new federal leader, had been anxious to have a Liberal candidate placed in the field in Assiniboia,[37] but Martin had advised strongly against it, warning that an open confrontation with the farmers might "... ruin the chances of the Liberal party in the province for several years to come."[38] King remained insistent,[39] and in a second letter the Saskatchewan Premier was much more emphatic:

> The whole situation in this Province with respect to the Grain Grower candidates is of such a serious character that we must proceed very slowly. If we proceed in such a way as to get the opposition of the Grain Growers' Organization to my mind we will make a very serious mistake ... the majority of the men whom I consult feel that it would be far better ultimately to support the Grain Grower candidate in some of the constituencies rather than get the Liberals in active opposition to the Grain Growers. As a matter of fact, the main thing in Assiniboia is to see that someone is elected who is opposed to the present Government - whether he calls himself a Grain Grower or a Liberal makes very little

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[36] *Daily Post*, 27 September 1919.

[37] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, King to W. M. Martin, 11 August 1919, p. 41731.

[38] *Ibid.*, W. M. Martin to King, 16 August 1919, p. 41736.

[39] *Ibid.*, King to W. M. Martin, 5 September 1919, pp. 41739-41.

difference.[40]

The Premier's sentiments were not shared by his former cabinet colleague, W. R. Motherwell. Ever the loyal party man, Motherwell could not understand Martin's attitude of "timorousness and timidity,"[41] and bombarded the Premier and the new federal leader with pleas to bring out a Liberal candidate before the farmers held their convention on 25 September.[42] King listened to Motherwell's arguments with a good deal of sympathy, and even encouraged him to accept the nomination himself.[43] Among local Liberals in Assiniboia too there were some who were not prepared to give in to the farmers. They proceeded to lay plans for a convention to be held a week before the farmers chose their candidate. As it turned out, the meeting was sharply divided over the wisdom of naming a candidate, and it adjourned without reaching any decision.[44] Then, at a second convention on 23 September, which was attended by fewer than forty Liberals, W. R. Motherwell was chosen to oppose Gould.[45]

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[40] *Ibid.*, W. M. Martin to King, 8 September 1919, p. 41742.

[41] *Ibid.*, W. R. Motherwell to King, 23 August 1919, p. 41977.

[42] *Ibid.*, W. R. Motherwell to King, 25 August 1919, pp. 41980-81; W. R. Motherwell to W. M. Martin, 25 August 1919, pp. 41983-84; same to same, 10 September 1919, pp. 41991-94.

[43] *Ibid.*, King to W. R. Motherwell, 5 September 1919, pp. 41985-86.

[44] *Daily Post*, 17 September 1919.

W. M. Martin and his cabinet colleagues in Regina regarded Motherwell's entry into the contest as "most unfortunate and ill-advised." As W. F. A. Turgeon put it:

> There is no doubt he will be defeated ... but the real danger is that he will dig a gulf between the Grain Growers and the Liberal party that may involve us all in ruin ...
>
> Martin is in a quandary as you can well imagine. Some of our private members (few however) are going into Assiniboia to help Motherwell; the greater part of them are themselves dependent on Grain growers' [*sic*] votes and dare not antagonize them. Motherwell and his friends are clamoring for our assistance: to grant it would alienate the G. G.'s from this Government all over the Province.[46]

It would seem to have been entirely Motherwell's own decision to run in Assiniboia.[47] He had not consulted with any of the provincial party hierarchy before doing so; his nomination came as a "bolt from the blue" to the Attorney-General, perhaps his closest friend in the inner circle of the party.[48] Several of his former cabinet colleagues, including Turgeon and Langley, attempted to persuade Motherwell to withdraw, but without success.[49] Premier Martin appealed to Mackenzie King to exert whatever influence he could on the stubborn Motherwell.[50] King sent an emissary to Regina, Sydney Fisher, but he too found that Motherwell was determined to stay in the fight to the finish.[51]

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[45] *Leader,* 27 September 1919; *Guide,* 1 October 1919; AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Scott, October 1919, pp. 78169-73.

[46] AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. F. A. Turgeon to Scott, 3 October 1919, pp. 78179-81.

[47] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, W. R. Motherwell to King, 27 September 1919, pp. 42002-05.

[48] AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. F. A. Turgeon to Scott, 3 October 1919, p. 78181.

The contest itself was remarkable for two reasons: the obvious energy and enthusiasm exhibited by the farmers conducting Gould's campaign,[52] and the fact that not one single provincial cabinet minister set foot in Assiniboia. The conspicuous absence of Premier Martin and the others may have been intended as a rebuff to Motherwell or to Mackenzie King for ignoring their advice. On the other hand, it may simply have been a trimming of sails to the prevailing political winds in the province, as one of the government's newspaper critics suggested at the time:

> The present situation leads to the inevitable conclusion that the leaders of the provincial Liberals are contemplating a separation from the Mackenzie King Liberals ... the growth of the Grain Growers' political movement has made old party dogma uncertain. Under the circumstances, it is not surprising that the Saskatchewan Liberal leaders are keeping anxiously quiet. There is more than a possibility that if the Grain Growers keep, temporarily at least, out

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[49] *Ibid.*, pp. 78181-84.

[50] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, W. M. Martin to King, 30 September 1919, pp. 41748-49.

[51] *Ibid.*, King to W. M. Martin, 8 October 1919, p. 41750; King to W. R. Motherwell, 8 October 1919, p. 42007; S. Fisher to King, 13 October 1919, p. 38964.

[52] *Daily Post*, 9 October 1919; *Guide*, 15 October 1919; *Oxbow Herald*, 23 October 1919.

> of the provincial field, the majority of the Saskatchewan Liberals will see their way clear to break away from the old Dominion machine entirely ... and develop a separate provincial Liberal party to continue a policy which has been generally acceptable to the people of the province in so far as local matters ... are concerned.[53]

The Premier, who had long been regarded by some in the party as being too much under the thumb of J. A. Calder, seems not to have been complete master of the cabinet in this situation either. George Langley was later to claim that, when the question of taking part in the Assiniboia campaign was discussed in cabinet, he and Dunning had informed the Premier that if any of their colleagues assisted Motherwell, they would be obliged to support Gould.[54]

Whatever the explanation, the fact was that Motherwell received no aid or comfort from his former cabinet colleagues in Regina. A lone M.L.A., J. G. Gardiner, whose loyalty to the cause of Liberalism was as unswerving as Motherwell's, Walter Scott, and two prominent federal Liberals, Frank Oliver and A. R. McMaster, stumped the riding on Motherwell's behalf.[55] Theirs was an impossible task, and the result was never in doubt. When the ballots were counted on 27 October, they showed that Motherwell had lost to the farmers' candidate by more than 5,000 votes in a straight two-way fight.[56] It was a smashing victory for the Grain Growers' political movement, and a rebuff to those Liberals who believed, as Motherwell did, that the agrarian revolt on the prairies could be contained within the Liberal party. The political initiative in Saskatchewan now lay with the farmers. "The simple fact of the political situation is that the death-knell of the two-party system, with its rigid and meaningless divisions, has been sounded," the *Regina Daily Post* informed its readers the day after the result in Assiniboia became known. "The men of independent thought and - more important - independent votes, are ... stronger today than the members of either of the old parties."[57]

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[53] *Turner's Weekly*, 25 October 1919. This independent journal, edited by Harris Turner, had first appeared in 1918. For a more detailed history of this lively but short-lived newspaper see W. K. Rolph, "Turner's Weekly: An Episode in Prairie Journalism," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. IV, No. 3 (Autumn, 1951), pp. 81-92.

[54] *Leader*, 7 November 1919.

[55] *Stoughton Times*, 30 October 1919. Gardiner's presence in Assiniboia did not escape the notice of the Grain Growers, and at the 1920 S.G.G.A. convention one delegate claimed that Gardiner had been sent down by the government to oppose the farmer candidate. This Gardiner emphatically denied. Anything he had done to assist Motherwell had been "entirely off his own bat." (AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1920, p. 87.)

In Alberta, the farmers did not discriminate between provincial and federal politics in their enthusiasm for political action. Under pressure from the Nonpartisan League and its own more militant members, the U.F.A. was, by the summer of 1919, committed to nominating candidates for both levels of government. What this would mean for the Liberal regime in that province was strikingly demonstrated later in the year, when a farmers' candidate was chosen to contest a provincial by-election in Cochrane. The farmer won handily, in a riding which had been reliably Liberal in the past, despite Premier Stewart's earnest protestations that his government had always had the farmers' interests at heart.[58] In Saskatchewan, on the other hand, the entrenched leadership of the farmers' organization sought to make a distinction between federal and provincial politics. Maharg and Musselman had made it clear at the 1919 S.G.G.A. convention that they were opposed to any direct identification of the Association with the new farmers' political movement. If the Grain Growers campaigned directly against the Liberals in federal elections, it would appear inconsistent to continue to co-operate with them in provincial affairs. Not all farmers felt as Maharg and Musselman did, but for three years the "interlocking directorate" which dominated the S.G.G.A. was able to resist all efforts to commit the farmers' organization to provincial political action.

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[56] *Oxbow Herald*, 9 October 1919; *Leader*, 28 October 1919; *Directory of Federal Elections*, p. 28.

[57] *Daily Post*, 28 October 1919.

The question of entering the provincial field was first raised at the founding convention of the N.N.P.P.A. in mid-September. The matter was discussed briefly, but no action was taken, the sentiment of the delegates being that they had no mandate to take any action along provincial lines.[59] Later in the fall, when a local farmers' convention in Kindersley nominated W. H. Harvey to contest the provincial seat vacated by Motherwell, the S.G.G.A. refused to officially endorse him. In announcing the Association's decision J. B. Musselman claimed that the Grain Growers had no reason to oppose the Martin government because they had no grievances in provincial politics.[60] The Liberals for their part declined to nominate a candidate, and Harvey was elected by acclamation.[61] The Liberals' strategy was not simply to give way before the rising tide of agrarian political agitation. When the new member, in his maiden speech in the Legislature, described himself as the first farmers' representative, this quick retort came from Charles Dunning:

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[58] L. G. Thomas, pp. 195-96; W. L. Morton, *Progressive Party*, pp. 86-93.

[59] *Guide*, 1 October 1919.

> When did I cease to be a representative of the Farmers' movement in this legislature? When did forty other men sitting round here cease to be representatives of the Farmers' movement in this legislature? The Farmers' movement since the earliest days of the Saskatchewan legislature has been represented in these seats.

If it had not been for his own close association with the organized farmers he did not believe he would have been invited to join the government. That government had been in the past and continued to be sympathetic to the needs of the agricultural community, and, he concluded, "... I cannot name today one outstanding issue between the government of this province and the Grain Growers' organization of this province."[62] What the Liberals hoped to do was convince Saskatchewan farmers that, although they might bear the same name, a Liberal in Regina had little in common with a Liberal in Ottawa. The Martin government, composed as it was mainly of farmers and concerned primarily with the farmers' interests, was entitled to be judged by its acts rather than by its label. There was no need to upset a Liberal government of farmers, Dunning was arguing, simply to put in a "farmers' government." Would the Grain Growers agree? The answer came at the next annual convention of the S.G.G.A.

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[60] *Leader*, 7 November 1919.

[61] *Ibid.*, 14 November 1919; *Guide*, 19 November 1919.

[62] *Leader*, 6 December 1919.

It opened in Saskatoon on 10 February 1920, with the usual galaxy of provincial cabinet ministers in attendance, "... very anxious about the way things were going."[63] J. A. Maharg was unanimously re-elected to a tenth term as president of the farmers' organization, and A. G. Hawkes a seventh as vice-president.[64] There was an abortive attempt to change the name of the Association to the United Farmers of Saskatchewan; the resolution was eventually defeated by a large majority.[65] Not as easily did the delegates, three-quarters of whom were representing their locals for the first time, resolve the question of entering provincial politics. Encouraged by W. H. Harvey's victory in Kindersley, the advocates of provincial political action sought to press their views upon the convention. They encountered the determined opposition of the two Grain Growers who were members of the provincial cabinet, George

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[63] AS, W. F. A. Turgeon Papers, General Files, S. Bingham to T. H. McConica, 4 March 1920.

[64] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1920, p. 97.

[65] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Langley and "Charlie" Dunning, and the secretary, J. B. Musselman. The result was, as one delegate who was there would later recall, "a very hot time."[66]

The convention agreed without difficulty to prohibit any unauthorized use of the S.G.G.A. name in support of independent political action, and then went on to express its disapproval of any provincial government using its power and influence in federal elections.[67] The question of entering the provincial field as an association proved too much for the delegates. They tried to sidestep the issue by appointing a committee to secure expressions of opinion from the locals and draft a provincial platform from the replies received. This platform was then to be presented to the next annual convention for its consideration and approval. Five delegates were elected from the floor to sit on this committee, but they did not seem anxious to act. Musselman seized the opportunity to have the Central Board made responsible for the drafting of the platform. In an impassioned speech to the delegates he appealed for this authority as a vote of confidence in the executive, and stressed the inexperience of many of those present:

> Provincially you have decided to invent a platform just as an excuse to get into politics. You have decided your Executive can't do it but you have actually elected people you didn't know. They say it and you say it yourselves ...

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[66] H. A. Innis, ed., *The Diary of Alexander James McPhail* [hereafter cited as *McPhail Diary*] (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1940), p. 21.

[67] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1920, pp. 81-83.

> If you are going to be moved or influenced by prejudice and by the desires of a comparative few to use this Association to accomplish their own political designs I don't think you want us as your directors.
>
> We should consider provincial politics with the same high ideals that actuated us in the federal field where, without thought of politics, we drafted a platform. On the contrary you have decided to do exactly what has been the curse of partyism all these years. Federally we have principles but provincially you have decided to formulate a political platform merely as a device to get into power.
>
> What we want is to get beneficial legislation passed and to you ... delegates who were not here last year I say that if we go out simply to invent a platform to get into politics I would not give a snap of the finger for the difference between that move and the move of any other political party Canada has ever had.

The delegates were won over. The resolution appointing a committee to draft a provincial platform was rescinded, and another was approved instructing the Central Board to secure expressions of opinion from locals respecting provincial political action.[68]

Musselman was well aware of the time that would be needed to obtain any comprehensive number of replies from the hundreds of locals scattered across the province, particularly during the spring months when farmers would be out on the land.[69] He did not circularize the locals until 22 June, after seeding had been completed, and asked that replies to sent in to the Central office by 15 July for the consideration of the executive. Musselman made no attempt to conceal his own attitude to the idea of entering provincial politics:

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[68] *Ibid.*, pp. 86-93, 99-100, 114-19.

[69] Anderson, p. 64.

> You will bear in mind that when the Canadian Council of Agriculture drafted a national or federal platform, it used as the basis of it a number of very important demands which the Associations of the western provinces had from time to time made for federal legislation and which had been denied them. We have no such basis for a provincial political platform, for as everyone will readily admit every provincial legislature and government since the province was formed has at all times been highly responsive to public opinion and particularly to the demands of organized agriculture.[70]

At the same time he also wrote to some seventy individuals and associations across the province seeking their suggestions for inclusion in the provincial platform to be drawn up by the S.G.G.A.[71]

Outwardly, Premier Martin was undisturbed by what had happened at the recent S.G.G.A. convention. "I see no reason at all for any anxiety with regard to the situation of the Government in the Province," he wrote to the Liberal M.L.A. for Weyburn.

> The record of the Government is good, and no one has anything to criticize it for. This being the case, those who propose to oppose it will have an uphill road in many constituencies; in fact I had no doubt that, if an election were held in the Province at the present time, we would carry the Province by a good majority. Our business, it seems to me, is to attend to our Provincial affairs and stand on our record.[72]

Still, prudence dictated that the Liberals take no chances. On 26 April Charles McGill Hamilton, a popular farmer and member of the

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[70] AS, J. B. Musselman Papers, Musselman to all locals, 22 June 1920.

[71] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, J. B. Musselman to Great War Veterans' Association, etc., 14 June 1920; J. B. Musselman to Dr. W. C. Murray, etc., 15 June 1920.

[72] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to C. M. Hamilton, 17 April 1920, pp. 24467-68.

S.G.G.A., was promoted from the back benches to the Agriculture portfolio. Hamilton's elevation to the cabinet was intended to relieve part of the heavy burden which had fallen on the shoulders of C. A. Dunning during the sixteen months since Motherwell's departure.[73] There can be little doubt that it was also calculated to strengthen the government's position among the Grain Growers. The *Leader*, ever a reliable barometer of party thinking, was quick to point out that Hamilton's appointment maintained "the well-defined Liberal policy in this Province of having an agriculturalist of outstanding ability in charge of the department which administers the services most clearly identified with the development and prosperity of Saskatchewan's basic and premier industry."[74]

If Premier Martin and the Liberals were to maintain the informal alliance between the government and the S.G.G.A. which had proved so beneficial in the past, they would also have to show careful forebearance in their attitude to federal politics. Martin had been quietly co-operating with Mackenzie King in setting up a National Liberal Organization Committee to revive the party across the country,[75] But late in 1919 the Premier decided to withdraw from the work altogether. "It is simply impossible for me, on account of the time and attention required to properly attend to my duties here," Martin explained to King on 11 December, "to continue to carry any responsibility in regard to Federal affairs."[76] Five months later, in a speech at Preeceville, the Saskatchewan Premier publicly severed all ties with the federal Liberals. Claiming that the close co-operation of federal and provincial parties had been harmful in the past, he declared that "... so long as I remain a member of the government of the province I will devote my time and my best endeavors to the affairs of the province. I will not be responsible for the organization nor [*sic*] for the policies of any Federal political party."[77]

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[73] *Leader*, 27 April 1920.

[74] *Ibid.*, 28 April 1920. Hamilton was a farmer, to be sure, and a member of the S.G.G.A., but he was perhaps best known in the province for his activities in the S.A.R.M., having served as its president for several years. The *Leader*, of course, was anxious to play up his connection with the Grain Growers, and ignored Hamilton's work in the S.A.R.M. entirely in its editorial.

[75] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, W. M. Martin to King, 3 September 1919, p. 41738; same to same, 29 September 1919, p. 41746;

Predictably, the speech caused a bitter reaction among some Liberals. W. R. Motherwell interpreted the Premier's declaration as a tacit acquiescence to the S.G.G.A.'s demand, as recorded at the Saskatoon convention, that federal and provincial politics be separated. It was one more confirmation of his long-held suspicion that "... Dunning on behalf of Billy [Martin] has assured Musselman that the Liberals will keep out of the federal field giving a free hand to the Grain Growers provided the latter will

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same to same, 14 October 1919, p. 41754; same to same, 17 November 1919, p. 41759.

[76] *Ibid.*, W. M. Martin to King, 11 December 1919, p. 41764.

[77] *Leader*, 6 May 1920.

not enter the provincial arena ...."[78] Mackenzie King regarded Martin's capitulation to the Grain Growers as little short of treachery. When the federal leader visited the west later in the year he found Regina Liberals friendly enough in private but distant and undemonstrative in public. King's reception was little warmer in Edmonton or Winnipeg, for there too the provincial Liberals had begun to realize that a too close association with the federal party could do them little good and might well cause them substantial injury.[79]

Martin's own political position remained secure throughout the rest of 1920. Only one by-election was held during the year, in Weyburn, where the new Minister of Agriculture was returned by acclamation.[80] The other two Grain Growers in the cabinet, Dunning and Langley, spent much of the summer addressing farmers' picnics, pointing out how the government had met their wishes in the past and repeating the now-familiar Liberal argument that it was therefore unnecessary for the S.G.G.A. to go into provincial politics as an Association.[81] The response to Musselman's circular letter requesting suggestions for a provincial political platform, predictably light, was doubtless also reassuring to the Liberals. The letter had been sent to 1,170 locals, and a total of 137 replies were received. Of these, 44 were opposed to provincial political action, 18 were indifferent or satisfied with the government, 28 were in favour of action but offered no suggestions and 41 were in favour and submitted proposals for inclusion in the platform. These covered a wide range of subjects, including direct legislation, proportional representation and other political innovations, provincial control of natural resources, complete prohibition and educational reforms of various kinds.[82] It was not a particularly impressive catalogue; certainly there was nothing here that could not be endorsed by a government anxious to placate the Grain Growers in order to remain in office. Letters had also been sent to many prominent individuals and associations across the province, but here too the response was a meagre one. Most refused to offer any suggestions or even to consider the request.[83]

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[78] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, W. R. Motherwell to King, 3 June 1902, pp. 47869-70; AS, Walter Scott Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Scott, October 1919, p. 78173. Another who resented the Premier's abandoning of the federal Liberal party was J. G. Gardiner, the M.L.A. for North Qu'Appelle, who was already beginning to exhibit that pugnacious spirit which was to be the hallmark of his political career. "While our socalled [*sic*] leaders are standing aside in this province we are being robbed of the best of our young Liberal blood through the circulation of false accusations against Liberalism which are going unanswered," he lamented to Mackenzie King. "Fear of the enemy can never win a victory and this inaction gives the impression to our young men that we are to [*sic*] weak to stand for what our party believes in." (PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 1 March 1920, p. 46506.)

[79] *The Mackenzie King Diaries, 1893-1931* [hereafter cited as *King Diaries*] (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), 28 February 1920, 23 April 1920, 22 October 1920.

[80] *Legislative Directory*, p. 154.

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[81] *Leader,* 26 June 1920, 5 July 1920; *Guide,* 30 June 1920, 4 August 1920.

[82] AS, J. B. Musselman Papers, "Views of Locals Re Proposed New Provincial Political Platform."

In view of the lack of interest that had been shown by the locals, the Central Board decided at the end of July not to proceed with the preparation of a platform. Instead, all locals were requested to give further consideration to the matter with a view to making recommendations to be considered at the next annual convention.[84] This did not satisfy those Grain Growers who were determined that the farmers' organization should enter provincial politics. One of the leaders of this group, W. M. Thrasher, sought to have the Kindersley N.N.P.P.A. pass a resolution at its August 1920 convention demanding that the S.G.G.A. executive proceed at once with the drafting of a provincial platform. He was supported in his stand by W. T. Badger, an erstwhile Conservative and M.L.A. for Rosetown who had decided to cast his lot with the farmers' political movement. They failed to secure approval of the resolution; indeed the convention refused even to consider it on the grounds that it dealt with provincial rather than federal politics.[85] This was only a skirmish; the real battle could be expected at Moose Jaw, site of the next S.G.G.A. convention.

The Liberal government at Regina was keenly aware of the economic motive that lay behind the farmers' enthusiasm for political action. By the winter of 1920-1921 the tariff had been overshadowed, in the eyes of Saskatchewan farmers at least, by the question of wheat marketing. Although agrarian criticism was directed chiefly against the federal government for its refusal to continue the Wheat Board in operation for another year, Regina Liberals were not unmindful of the possibility that as wheat prices sagged to ever lower levels, it could be turned and directed against them. Saskatchewan had the most to lose, since it produced more wheat than the other two prairie provinces combined,[86] and it was in Saskatchewan that the agitation for the revival of the Wheat Board became most intense. Resolutions demanding the re-establishment of the Wheat Board received unanimous approval at a province-wide convention of the N.N.P.P.A. in October 1920, and at the annual shareholders' meeting of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company a month later.[87] Anxious to show their sympathy for the farmers' plight, the Liberals introduced and passed a similar resolution during the fall session of the Legislature.[88]

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[83] *Ibid.*, "Replies From Individuals In Re Provincial Platform."

[84] *Guide*, 11 August 1920.

[85] *Ibid.*, 18 August 1920.

In the meantime the Canadian Council of Agriculture, realizing that all such appeals were likely to leave the Meighen government unmoved, had begun to examine the feasibility of organizing a voluntary contract pool as an alternative to the Wheat

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[86] Patton, p. 202.

[87] *Guide*, 13 October 1920; *Leader*, 25 October 1920.

[88] *Journals*, 1920, pp. 30-31.

Board. The Council's plan was released to the public in December 1920. It called for the establishment of a United Farmers' Grain Corporation that would act as selling agency for the pooled wheat of farmers in the three prairie provinces. Farmers who agreed to participate in the scheme would be obliged to sign a contract pledging to deliver all their wheat to the Corporation for five years.[89] These new developments did not escape the notice of the Saskatchewan Premier. Late in December, after the Council had revealed the details of its plan, he wrote to George Langley:

> The Grain Growers' Convention meets the first of February and from present appearances this is the subject which will overshadow everything else and, if you and Mr. Dunning and Mr. Hamilton were in a position to deal with the question, some Government policy having been announced prior thereto, I believe the question of the Grain Growers going into Provincial politics would become comparatively insignificant.[90]

With this Martin's cabinet colleagues readily agreed. On 12 January 1921 the government announced that it had secured the services of James Stewart and F. W. Riddell, the chief executive officers of the Canada Wheat Board, to determine "whether any method can be devised which will tend to overcome the uncertainties, irregularities and speculative disadvantages of the present methods of marketing wheat."[91] This action was received with general satisfaction by the Grain Growers when they assembled in Moose Jaw three weeks later.[92] The tentative wheat pool contract drafted by the Canadian Council of Agriculture was also considered at length. There were not a few at the convention, including Langley and Dunning, who considered the scheme to be unworkable, and believed that the farmers should concentrate their energies on the next federal election and put a government into power in Ottawa that would be more sympathetic to their appeals for the revival of the Wheat Board. In the end, though, the delegates did agree, by unanimous vote, that the S.G.G.A. should continue to co-operate with its national counterpart in working out some new system of marketing grain in Canada.[93]

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[89] Patton, pp. 200-201; *Guide*, 15 December 1920.

[90] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to G. Langley, 31 December 1920, p. 33331.

[91] *Leader*, 12 January 1921.

The other question which dominated the "farmers' parliament" in Moose Jaw, provincial political action, was not disposed of with the same unanimity. The delegates readily approved the Central Board's decision not to proceed with the drafting of a provincial platform after J. B. Musselman appealed for an affirmative vote as an expression of confidence in the executive.[94] The next resolution, commending the Martin government for dissociating itself from federal politics, produced a much livelier debate. When one of the delegates questioned the Premier's sincerity, noting that a provincial cabinet minister, W. E. Knowles, had recently attended a federal Liberal organization meeting in Ottawa, "Charlie" Dunning was on his feet at once. Premier Martin had declared at Preeceville that neither the government nor its political organization would be used for the advancement of any federal political party, Dunning explained, but individual members of the government were still free to do as they pleased:

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[92] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes,* 1921, p. 51.

[93] *Ibid.,* pp. 78-95.

[94] *Ibid.,* pp. 53-54.

> Neither the premier of this province nor this convention can prevent me as a citizen of Canada from getting out in public meetings in this province and advocating those principles I believe in ... I propose at the next Dominion elections to be out on the platforms in this province advocating the principles for which I have stood for these years past and which are identical with the principles of this organization ... If my good colleague Mr. Knowles or any of my colleagues differ from me on some question of Dominion politics, for which as a government we are not responsible, how can I deny him that measure of personal liberty which I hold to myself?

This seemed to satisfy the delegates, and the resolution was approved.[95]

The debate on the main issue -- whether the S.G.G.A. as an Association should enter provincial politics -- was protracted and acrimonious. A group of delegates from the Wynyard local attempted to push through a motion censuring the Grain Growers' executive for consistently discouraging efforts to organize a provincial party, but it received only a handful of votes.[96] After some further discussion the convention agreed to refer the whole matter to the locals for reconsideration and postpone any final decision for another year. The vote was close, so close that President Maharg was obliged to ask for a second show of hands before he could declare the motion carried. Some of the more militant Grain Growers were still determined to force the convention to take immediate action. One, F. S. Wilbur, moved that the Association "... enter into provincial politics and that the necessary steps be taken for that purpose," but his resolution was defeated. G. W. Robertson, one of the Wynyard delegates who had earlier tried to censure the S.G.G.A. executive, then introduced another resolution authorizing the Central Board to provide the means for individual locals to take action if they so desired. It too failed to carry after J. B. Musselman "warned the convention of the folly of lending assistance to a party of which we knew nothing."[97]

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[95] *Ibid.*, pp. 56-57.

[96] *Ibid.*, pp. 65-68.

The Grain Growers had again decided against provincial political action, at least for the time being. Those newspapers which were friendly to the Martin government were quick to praise the decision as the proper one, one that would save the S.G.G.A. from internal dissension.[98] The government's critics saw the matter in quite a different light. In their view there was no longer any doubt that it was attempting to keep the farmers out of provincial politics until after the next provincial election was safely out of the way.[99] If an election were called during the summer, already considered a distinct possibility in some quarters, the S.G.G.A. would as an organization be officially neutral, though it remained to be seen whether all members would consider themselves bound by the decision reached at Moose Jaw.

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[97] *Ibid.*, pp. 95-100, 116-19.

[98] *Leader*, 8 February 1921; *Moose Jaw Evening Times*, 9 February 1921.

In fact, it soon became apparent that the more militant Grain Growers were determined to nominate independent candidates with or without the official sanction of the farmers' organization. In riding after riding across the province groups of farmers began organization work, held nominating conventions and, in some cases, drafted platforms.[100] In at least one constituency, Rosthern, a Grain Growers' meeting called to discuss the advisability of choosing an independent farmers' candidate decided instead to endorse the Liberal nominee,[101] but in others the farmers who had led the fight for provincial political action at the 1920 and 1921 conventions were firmly in control. J. B. Musselman brought all his influence to bear in an effort to prevent S.G.G.A. locals from taking part in provincial politics,[102] but by the third week of May a total of twenty-four constituencies had nominated independent farmers' candidates.[103] Preparations were also well in hand for a province-wide convention to be held in Saskatoon at the end of the month.[104] Harris Turner, the blind war veteran who had first been elected to the Legislature in 1917 as one of the soldiers' representatives, emerged as the leading figure in this loosely-organized group of Independents. He was one of the three members of the provisional executive -- the others were W. M. Thrasher and Thomas Carroll -- but it was Turner who acted as official spokesman:

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[99] *Esterhazy Observer*, 10 February 1921; *Saskatchewan Herald* (Battleford), 19 February 1921; *Saskatoon Star*, 28 February 1921; *Western Review* (Foam Lake), 10 March 1921.

[100] *Saskatoon Star*, 3 March 1921, 16 March 1921, 29 March 1921, 14 April 1921, 16 April 1921, 20-21 April 1921.

[101] *Ibid.*, 25 April 1921.

[102] *Guide*, 13 April 1921, 27 April 1921.

> Perhaps I can make the present situation in so far as the Independent movement is concerned, quite clear. It is certain that many candidates, calling themselves Independents, are prepared or preparing to conduct campaigns in many of the constituencies in the province. These individuals are running their own show. So far as I know, these candidates have only one thing in common and that is that they believe that the time has come when party government is no longer necessary in this province. They hold that the men or women sitting in the legislature should have only one interest before them and that is the best interest of the province as a whole; they cannot see why it should be necessary for a candidate to recognize a duty to a party as well as to his province. They believe that the time has come when the party system is a detriment to good government, if it were ever anything else.[105]

In addition to these so-called Independents, the Nonpartisan League had reappeared in the province, and was again conducting an active canvass for members and funds.[106] The League's platform was little changed from the war years -- it still called for an extensive programme of government ownership encompassing banks, elevators and flour mills -- but its rhetoric had grown more radical. League speakers proclaimed the Regina *Leader* and the *Grain Growers' Guide* to be instruments of capitalist oppression,[107] and the Martin government was soundly condemned in terms calculated to appeal to farmer and workingman alike. Farmers were warned that "... the Martin regime ... has all along proved its unwillingness to do anything to stop the exploitation of the producers of this province by large Middlemen Interests." It had erected no legislative barriers "... to prevent the great private monopolies outside of the Province from controlling the banking, marketing, storage and transportation facilities, upon which the economic life of the people depends." As for the government's record in dealing with labour problems, one League organizer had this to say:

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[103] *Saskatoon Star*, 19 May 1921.

[104] *Ibid.*, 13 May 1921.

[105] *Ibid.*, 16 May 1921.

[106] *Guide*, 24 September 1919, 3 December 1919, 1 September 1920.

> Recent revelations made at Bienfait, Sask., show damnable conditions prevailing among the miners. Men are working twelve and fourteen hours per day for the paltry wage of 40 cents per hour under hygienic conditions that would disgrace the Hottentot. These conditions have been going on for many years. When the workers attempted recently to organize in self-protection, the organizer was "deported" from this Province into the United States by mine-owning hoodlums and their tools, without one word of protest from the "People's" Government at Regina ...[108]

The real strength of the Nonpartisan League remained something of a mystery, though it claimed a membership of more than 13,000 by 1921.[109] League organizers appeared to be concentrating their activities in northeastern Saskatchewan, particularly among settlers from central and eastern Europe, and boasted that they had "broken the back of the Liberal party in the foreign districts of the province."[110] In some ridings the Nonpartisan League proceeded to nominate candidates of its own, in others the League chose to support the Independent nominee,[111] but in either case it was a threat which the Liberals could not take lightly.[112]

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[107] *Leader*, 4 February 1921, 21 March 1921.

[108] *Turner's Weekly*, 31 July 1920.

The Martin government had far less to fear from the official Opposition. The Conservatives had been convincingly repudiated by the voters in 1917, and the party was seriously handicapped by the growing unpopularity of the Conservative government at Ottawa. Donald Maclean and his Opposition colleagues had yielded to the pressure of agrarian opinion and joined with the government in endorsing the tariff planks of the "New National Policy" during the first postwar session of the Legislature,[113] but this had done

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[109] *Leader*, 24 January 1921.

[110] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to Bishop N. Budka, 28 December 1920, p. 3878; *Leader*, 4 February 1921.

[111] *Saskatoon Star*, 21 March 1921, 26 May 1921; *Leader*, 24 March 1921, 26 May 1921.

[112] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, E. R. Ketcheson to W. M. Martin, 1 April 1921, p. 50093; W. M. Martin to E. R. Ketcheson, 4 April 1921, p. 50094.

[113] *Journals*, 1918-1919, pp. 79-80.

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little to redeem the party in the eyes of Saskatchewan farmers. Despite Maclean's efforts to revive the Conservative party, it continued to decline in strength and popularity. The weakness of the Conservatives was emphasized by their failure to contest a single by-election in the province after the war, and by the desertion of some of the party's best known supporters. Chief among these was W. T. Badger, who publicly announced in March 1921 that he would not accept a Conservative nomination for the next election and intended to run as an Independent.[114] A month later Donald Maclean created an even greater sensation by tendering his resignation as leader to the party's annual convention in Regina. The Conservatives made no attempt to replace him, and indeed would not do so for three years. Instead the direction of the party's affairs was left in the hands of the provincial executive. To this body fell the responsibility for placing candidates in the field, and making other arrangements for the coming election. Just one candidate had been nominated by the time of the Regina convention, and the party decided to contest only those ridings where there appeared to be some hope of success.[115]

The Liberal party meanwhile mended its fences and anxiously watched the trend of events in the province. Premier Martin kept his own counsel about the date of the next election, though the signs of the Liberals' campaign preparations were unmistakable. On 1 March W. E. Knowles' brief and unspectacular career in provincial politics came to an end with the announcement of his resignation as Minister of Telephones. He gave as the reason his desire to devote more attention to his law practice in Moose Jaw,[116] but it is not unlikely that his differences with the Premier over the question of co-operating with Mackenzie King were the real cause of his leaving. Knowles had made no secret of his continued loyalty to the federal Liberal party, a loyalty which had aroused the ire of the Grain Growers at Moose Jaw. He was shortly to try again for a seat in Parliament,[117] a place even farther removed from Moose Jaw and his law practice than was the provincial Legislature in Regina. There is no evidence to suggest that Martin attempted to persuade him to stay; indeed the departure of this avowed Liberal partisan was interpreted at the time as yet another of the Premier's efforts to strengthen his government in the farmers' eyes.[118]

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[114] *Saskatoon Star*, 29 March 1921.

[115] *Leader*, 28 April 1921. Maclean was subsequently appointed to the bench. (*Ibid.*, 14 June 1921.)

W. F. A. Turgeon's resignation two weeks later to accept an appointment to the bench was quite another matter.[119] His departure, which had been mooted for some time,[120] was a decided loss to the province and the party. Turgeon was the oldest surviving member of the government. He had joined the cabinet of Premier Walter Scott in 1907, and served the province ably as Attorney-General. Roman Catholics in Saskatchewan had looked him as their special representative in the cabinet, and the relationship had paid political dividends to the Liberal party time and again over the years. Now he was gone. It had been rumoured for a time that J. A. Cross, one of the soldier representatives in the Legislature and a popular Regina lawyer, would succeed Turgeon as Attorney-General, but the portfolio was filled by the Premier himself.[121]

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[116] *Leader*, 1 March 1921.

[117] *Ibid.*, 13 April 1921.

[118] *Saskatoon Star*, 2 March 1921.

[119] *Leader*, 14 March 1921.

[120] *Saskatoon Star*, 2 March 1921.

The other vacancy in the cabinet remained unfilled for some weeks. When an announcement finally was made, on 23 April, it surprised the whole province. The newest member of the Martin government turned out to be J. A. Maharg, the perennial president of the S.G.G.A. and the Saskatchewan "Co-op" and Progressive M.P. for Maple Creek.[122] By his own admission, the negotiations had been going on "for some time."[123] Since Maharg's career in provincial politics was to be so stormy, his own explanation of his reasons for leaving the federal field and accepting Martin's invitation to join the government at Regina are worth quoting in detail:

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[121] *Ibid.*; *Leader*, 15 March 1921.

[122] *Leader*, 23 April 1921.

[123] AS, Violet McNaughton Papers, J. A. Maharg to the Officers and Members of Locals, 23 April 1921.

> I am entering the Martin Government not as a politician but as a representative of the farmers. To me, politics is a secondary consideration, my first duty being to secure better consideration of the needs of the farmers, and more effective recognition of the new elements in the political thought of Western Canada. Today, men do not stand before the public as representatives of traditional names such as Liberals and Conservatives, but rather as representatives of certain ideals, and things existing in the present. Old party bonds and traditions have been snapped.

In taking this step he hoped to be able to serve the farmers of Saskatchewan more effectively and added, almost as an afterthought:

> Had any considerations been suggested that in any way would have interfered with me giving my heartiest support to the Farmers' movement throughout Canada, I would not even have considered the position.[124]

Liberal newspapers naturally welcomed the announcement,[125] and even the *Grain Growers' Guide* commented favourably, noting that "... without entering the political field as an organization the Grain Growers of Saskatchewan have secured practical control ... of the governmental machinery of the province ...."[126] J. B. Musselman joined in the chorus of approval, and from his prolific pen came this fulsome tribute:

> The grain growers of Saskatchewan have good reason to congratulate themselves. The thing which farmers in all provinces have wished for, for which in some they are earnestly laboring, which in Ontario they secured only after a hard struggle, has come about in Saskatchewan easily and naturally, without turmoil or disturbance of industry or generating class antagonism - that is the

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[124] *Leader,* 3 May 1921.

[125] *Ibid.*, 23 April 1921.

[126] *Guide,* 11 May 1921.

> tried and trusted leaders of the organized farmers are in position to control the administration of this province. Truly this has been an achievement of which every grain grower should be proud.[127]

From Winnipeg, J. W. Dafoe offered a very different assessment, one which the passage of time was to prove remarkably accurate:

> It is not at all clear that Mr. Martin has strengthened his Government by taking in J. A. Maharg, the President of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers. The complaints of the radical element in the Grain Growers for some years past have been that there is too close a connection between the Saskatchewan Government and the executive of the Grain Growers and the inclusion of Maharg in the Government is confirmation of their suspicions. His selection is more apt to strengthen than to discourage the Independent movement which is largely inspired by hostility towards the recognized leaders of the Grain Growers' movement.[128]

Maharg was careful to indicate that he was prepared to resign from the presidency of the S.G.G.A. if that was the wish of the next convention,[129] but some locals demanded that he step down at once, and others passed resolutions deploring his decision to join the Martin government.[130] That Maharg's action displeased those Grain Growers who wished to see the farmers' organization enter provincial politics should not have been surprising. How could it have been otherwise, when such a staunch supporter of the

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[127] *Ibid.*, 4 May 1921.

[128] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 2 May 1921.

[129] *Guide*, 11 May 1921.

[130] *Ibid.*, 1 June 1921; *Saskatoon Star*, 1 June 1921; AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, Bickleigh G.G.A. to J. B. Musselman, 13 June 1921.

Progressive party abandoned the larger federal field to throw his weight and influence behind a government which was being accused of using the S.G.G.A. to maintain itself in office?

J. A. Maharg's entry into the cabinet was one further illustration of that alliance between the government and the Grain Growers which had made the Liberal administration at Regina a "farmers' government" in all but name. Three weeks later, when Premier Martin ended the suspense and called an election for 9 June, he avoided even the use of the party label, and the campaign which followed was conducted not by Liberals but by "Supporters of the Martin Government." His explanation for the timing of the election, which his opponents were to claim was intended to catch them unawares,[131] was borrowed from the farmers' own creed. They believed that provincial politics should be kept separate from federal politics; he had chosen a date that would avoid any possibility of conflict with a federal election. The Premier's desire that "the public business of Saskatchewan ... be dealt with on its merits and not confused or affected by issues which affect the whole of Canada and questions which are of federal jurisdiction"[132] was laudable, to be sure, but hardly the real explanation. An offhand remark by one of those provincial civil servants was doubled as party organizers at election time came closer to the mark: "When you have your guns and amunition [*sic*] ready you are a fool to wait until the other fellow has his ready."[133] There is no question but that the Liberals were better prepared for an election than any of their opponents. Proof of this came on 2 June, the day nominations closed, when sixteen seats went to the Liberals by acclamation.[134]

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[131] *Saskatoon Star*, 17 May 1921, 21 May 1921, 30 May 1921.

[132] *Leader*, 17 May 1921.

Never before had there been such a confusion of party labels as there was in 1921. A total of forty-two candidates calling themselves Independents or Progressives contested Saskatchewan's first postwar general election, along with a scattering of Conservatives, Nonpartisans and Labour men.[135] The Independents and Progressives recognized no leader and created little in the way of machinery to fight the election. This was intentional, for they were opposed to the party system on principle and did not consider themselves a party in the traditional sense. At a sparsely attended convention in Saskatoon at the end of May they did set up a central committee under the direction of Harris Turner, W. M.

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[133] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, "Memorandum Re Saskatchewan Situation", n.d.

[134] *Leader*, 3 June 1921.

[135] In addition to the thirty-five Independents and seven Progressives there were four Conservative, three Nonpartisan, three Labour, three Independent-Conservative, one Independent-Nonpartisan, one Independent-Labour and one Independent pro-Government candidates. The Liberals had sixty-two candidates. (*Legislative Directory*, pp. 91-158.) It is impossible to determine how many of the candidates who called themselves Independents or Progressives were affiliated with the loosely-organized political group headed by Harris Turner, since in some ridings there was more than one Independent nominated.

Thrasher and Thomas Carroll to co-ordinate organization work in the various constituencies, but it was to function only until election day. The thirty-odd delegates placed themselves on record as being "opposed to the present party system of government with all its attendant evils of patronage, corruption and so forth." In its place they wished to establish "... a business system of administration for the province of Saskatchewan under which the responsibility will be with the people's representatives rather than with the party caucus." No leader was chosen, of course, and no plans were made for assuming power if the group gained a majority of seats in the next Legislature. They did not even draw up a common platform, though some at least of the seven candidates present had been pledged to specific reforms by their nominating conventions. Instead the convention declared itself "in favor of each independent candidate carrying his platform on the floor of the house to be there debated on its merits."[136]

These various platforms bore little similarity to one another save in their endorsation of direct legislation, democratic nominating conventions and an end to "machine-made candidates," and the complete abolition of the patronage system. Some called as well for educational reforms of various kinds, ranging from improved schools in the country districts to the abolition of separate schools and the "complete separation of church and state." Others promised the establishment of a Department of Co-operative Affairs to promote the development of co-operative abattoirs, tanneries and woolen mills, a Bureau of Forestry to protect Saskatchewan's timber resources, rural credit societies and an active provincial immigration policy.[137]

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[136] *Saskatoon Star*, 31 May 1921, 1 June 1921.

Against this the government pointed to its record in bringing the province through what Premier Martin referred to in his manifesto to the voters as "the past four years ... of ... social, financial and economic dislocation."[138] Much was made of the fact that the Liberals had given the province sound competent government, carrying on the programmes initiated before the war and adjusting these as new circumstances demanded. According to the Liberals, Saskatchewan boasted the lowest per capita public debt west of the Great Lakes, and they pledged that they would continue to administer the province's affairs in a "business-like manner" in the future.[139]

From all accounts, the 1921 election was a remarkably sedate affair compared to previous contests in the province.[140] Older Liberals lamented the tameness of the campaign, and remembered with pleasure the exciting and vicious struggles of the past when the life of the government had been threatened.[141] There was little hostility to the Martin government among the farmers; even the Independents took pains to emphasize that they had no real criticism to offer of its record, but were opposed to it simply because it was a party government.[142] In the last weeks of the campaign the government virtually ignored the Nonpartisan League and the Conservatives, concentrating its fire on the Independents, whom C. A. Dunning categorized in a speech at Saskatoon as "the greatest hotch-potch ... that ever appeared in opposition to any British Government anywhere."[143] Liberals pointed to the confused political situation that existed in Manitoba, where no party had a majority in the Legislature, as proof of the evils of what was mistakenly termed an experiment in "group government," and appealed to the voters not to repeat such folly in Saskatchewan.[144]

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[137] *Ibid.*, 18 March 1921, 1 April 1921, 7 April 1921, 27 May 1921.

[138] *Leader*, 17 May 1921.

[139] *Ibid.*, 17 May 1921, 21 May 1921, 25 May 1921; *Saskatoon Star*, 31 May 1921.

[140] *Battleford Press*, 19 May 1921; *Saskatoon Star*, 8 June 1921; *Leader*, 9 June 1921.

The Liberals were returned on 9 June, though their dominance of the Legislature, so apparent since 1912, was beginning to break down. Including the sixteen seats which had gone to the Liberals by acclamation, they won a total of forty-three of the sixty-three seats in the Legislature. The government's share of the popular vote slipped as well, from 56.6 per cent in 1917 to 52.5 per cent in 1921.

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[141] AS, Walter Scott Papers, G. A. Scott to Scott, 14 July 1921, pp. 18464-68.

[142] *Saskatoon Star*, 30 May 1921, 7 June 1921.

[143] *Leader*, 4 June 1921.

[144] *Ibid.*, 28 May 1921, 7 June 1921.

The Conservative party virtually disappeared, winning only two seats, Souris and Moosomin. Fourteen Independents of various stripes were elected, among them Harris Turner, who carried one of the two Saskatoon seats created through redistribution in 1920; Donald H. McDonald, a veteran of Territorial politics, in South Qu'Appelle; G. W. Robertson in Wynyard; and W. H. Harvey in Kindersley. In Moose Jaw, another two-member riding, a C.P.R. conductor, W. G. Baker, headed the poll to become the province's first Labour M.L.A.[145]

The Premier was gratified with the result, notwithstanding the fact that Liberal representation in the new House would be smaller than it had been in the old. "I think myself that we were very fortunate to get through as well as we did as I found conditions very much more unsettled in some parts of the Province than I had anticipated," he confessed to a member of the beleaguered Norris government in Manitoba. "A great many of the people do not know what they want but are willing to vote for anyone running as a candidate against a Government."[146] The defeat of George Langley in Redberry, largely, it would appear, on account of local issues, was of course a disappointment,[147] but there was never any suggestion that he would retire from public life. He was re-elected by acclamation in the far northern riding of Cumberland in one of the three deferred elections that took place in August. The result of the others, in Ile à la Crosse and Tisdale, were also favourable to the Liberals, bringing their strength up to forty-six.[148]

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[145] Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," p. 344; *Legislative Directory*, pp. 45-46. Included in the Liberal total is J. A. Maharg, who was elected as an Independent pro-Government candidate in Morse. One Independent-Conservative was elected, seven Independents and six who preferred the appelation Progressive. The redistribution act of 1920 had created three two-member ridings, in Regina, Saskatoon, and Moose Jaw, and added one new rural riding, Gravelbourg. (Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 11 Geo. V, Chapter 13.)

[146] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to A. B. Hudson, 13 June 1921, p. 24419. Some Liberals had admitted to the Premier that "... on our side there was perhaps too much reliance on the splendid record of your Government, which it was thought would have been more universally realized and appreciated, than it proved to be." (*Ibid.*, G. E. Wainwright to Martin, 13 June 1921, p. 24430.)

The Independents, too, professed to be delighted with the outcome,[149] and well they might, for they had done remarkably well. There can be no doubt that the Premier's choice of an election date had, intentionally or not, given them little time to mount an effective province-wide campaign. The scattered nature of the opposition encountered by the government was proof of this. In Pelly, for instance, Nonpartisan, Independent and Independent-Conservative candidates were arrayed against the Liberal, and he scraped through with only a plurality of the votes cast, while in Saltcoats, immediately to the south, the Liberal was elected by acclamation because no other candidate had entered the field by the time nominations closed. This was by no means an isolated case. Instances of this phenomenon occurring within the same geographical area could be found in other parts of the province as well, suggesting that opposition to the Liberals, while considerable, was not yet well organized.[150] There were seventeen uncontested seats, and easy Liberal victories in others, but there were also, as the Premier himself admitted, "... many districts where the result was very uncertain and I really wonder now how we succeeded as well as we did."[151] Whether the threat posed by this loosely-organized group of Independents was really "... so serious ... that a month's further delay might have meant defeat"[152] for the Martin government remains a matter of conjecture. It is not likely that the Liberals would have suffered the fate of their Alberta counterparts had they waited until later in the summer to go to the country, but they might very well have found themselves without a majority in the Legislature, as had happened in Manitoba in 1920. The Martin government had been badly shaken on 9 June, but it had managed to survive, by its concessions to agrarianism on the one hand and, on the other, by severing its ties with the federal Liberal party.

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[147] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 13 June 1921, p. 51466; A. P. McNab to King, 13 June 1921, p. 55138; AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to G. E. Wainwright, 11 July 1921, p. 24432.

[148] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 45-46.

[149] *Saskatoon Star*, 10 June 1921.

From this point, W. M. Martin's political position steadily deteriorated, as the close relationship between his government and the organized farmers began to disintegrate. In October he was obliged to ask for the resignation of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, George Langley, on account of the latter's alleged interference in a judicial matter.[153] Two months later, the Premier aroused the ire of the Grain Growers and of his Minister of Agriculture, J. A. Maharg, when he attacked the Progressive party and its platform during a speech in support of W. R. Motherwell, who was contesting the Regina seat in the federal election then in progress.[154]

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[150] A. J. Milnor, "Agrarian Protest in Saskatchewan, 1929-1949: A Study in Ethnic Politics" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Duke University, 1962), pp. 34-35.

[151] AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Martin to C. Stewart, 8 August 1921, p. 24481.

[152] W. L. Morton, *Progressive Party*, p. 110.

The circumstances surrounding Langley's sensational departure from the government can be summarized briefly. The Premier accused him of interfering in an investigation into the conduct of a constable of the Saskatchewan Provincial Police, and produced as evidence a letter Langley had written to the magistrate in charge of the inquiry. Such interference Martin found reprehensible; it was, in his words, the action of a man who "... has no sense of public morality ... and has not a proper appreciation of the absolute necessity of keeping the administration of justice clean."[155] Langley claimed that he had been approached by certain individuals in his riding to interest himself in this constable's case, and had done so in the sincere belief that the man was being ill-treated by his superior officers. While admitting that he had committed a "grave indiscretion,"[156] Langley considered the Premier's peremptory demand for his resignation "a harsh result to follow an act prompted by considerations of mercy."[157] On the face of it, Martin seems to have had no choice but to ask for Langley to resign, and the cabinet evidently concurred in the decision.[158] Whatever the merits of the case, though, George Langley, now seventy years of age, deserved a better fate after his long career in public service.

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[153] *Leader*, 19 October 1921.

[154] *Ibid.*, 5 December 1921.

[155] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1921-1922, No. 16, W. M. Martin to G. Langley, 28 September 1921.

The second upheaval which shook the government -- J. A. Maharg's resignation in December -- is more difficult to explain. Ever since the Premier's Preeceville speech in May 1920 the farmers had assumed, incorrectly as it turned out, that at the time of the next federal election they would have nothing to fear from W. M. Martin or his government. When J. A. Maharg joined the cabinet in April 1921, J. B. Musselman had written in the *Grain Growers' Guide* that this would "... fully assure the last doubter of the complete severance of the government of this province from federal party affiliations, especially when considered in conjunction with the resignations of Mr. Motherwell and Mr. Knowles."[159] R. M. Johnson, secretary of the N.N.P.P.A., had been of the same opinion, believing that it "should give added assurance that the Saskatchewan Government will be sympathetic to us at the next election."[160] To be sure, the Premier no longer held any official responsibility for federal party matters, but Ottawa and Regina Liberals continued to co-operate through the National Liberal Organization Committee, a body which counted among its Saskatchewan members such party stalwarts as W. E. Knowles, W. R. Motherwell, and J. G. Gardiner, the pugnacious M.L.A. for North Qu'Appelle who, despite his comparative youth, was rapidly rising to a place of influence in party ranks by 1921.[161]

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[156] *Ibid.*, G. Langley to W. M. Martin, 4 October 1921.

[157] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, G. Langley to W. L. M. King, March 1922.

[158] *Leader*, 17 December 1921.

[159] *Guide*, 4 May 1921.

In January, months before it was known there would be an election in 1921, the Saskatchewan executive of the National Liberal Organization Committee had considered the possibility of reaching some sort of understanding with the Progressives in order to avoid three-cornered contests in the province.[162] Feelers were sent out to the provincial secretary of the N.N.P.P.A. in February, and T. A. Crerar, when informed of these developments, gave his encouragement.[163] In the end the N.N.P.P.A. executive flatly refused even to meet with the Liberals, let alone agree to any apportioning of constituencies.[164] Premier Martin had taken no part in these abortive negotiations, of course, but he too was anxious to see the Liberals and Progressives work together, particularly in his own home riding of Regina.[165] Martin made a trip to the east early in September, after the Meighen government had made up its mind to go to the country, and left at least one Ottawa Liberal in no doubt as to what his intentions were:

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[160] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, R. M. Johnson to Crerar, 25 April 1921.

[161] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, W. R. Motherwell to King, 17 January 1921, p. 55862; A. Haydon to King, 12 April 1921, p. 52947.

[162] *Ibid.*, W. R. Motherwell to King, 17 January 1921, pp. 55863-64.

> I am satisfied that Martin is most anxious and willing to do all he can to further our cause, but of course he must act discreetly. He is not without hope that with a little tact, he might send from his Province four to six supporters, some will win their seats by election, and others, he hopes to arrange by a saw off with the Farmers.[166]

The prospects of any "saw off with the Farmers" dimmed on 10 September when the Saskatchewan executive of the National Liberal Organization Committee made public the correspondence which had passed between them earlier in the year, and declared that "the flag of Liberalism" would not be hauled down in Saskatchewan.[167] There would be no more public talk of co-operation -- gratifying no doubt to stalwarts like Gardiner who were loath to vacate the field to the farmers[168] -- but Martin and Dunning continued to work quietly behind the scenes. They attempted to make a bargain with the N.N.P.P.A. whereby they would throw their weight behind the Progressives elsewhere in the province if it agreed not to oppose W. R. Motherwell in Regina.[169] Crerar was agreeable,[170] but the local Progressive organization in Regina would have nothing to do with it, and proceeded to put up a candidate against the former Minister of Agriculture.[171]

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[163] *Ibid.*, C. G. Locke to R. M. Johnson, 24 February 1921, p. 52950; QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to R. M. Johnson, 28 February 1921; same to same, 10 March 1921.

[164] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, R. M. Johnson to C. G. Locke, 11 March 1921, p. 52957.

[165] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, R. M. Johnson to Crerar, 8 August 1921.

[166] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. A. Robb to King, 5 September 1921, p. 56894. It is clear from King's diary that Martin made similar intimations to the leader of the federal Liberals, with whom he met twice during his eastern visit. (*King Diaries*, 3 September 1921; PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, King to J. A. Robb, 10 September 1921, p. 56895.)

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[167] *Leader*, 10 September 1921.

[168] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 5 September 1921, pp. 52171-73.

[169] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 14 October 1921.

[170] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to C. A. Dunning, 12 October 1921.

[171] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, W. J. Orchard to T. A. Crerar, 22 October 1921. Crerar was incensed. "Frankly I think you and Orchard have handled this thing very poorly," he wrote to R. M. Johnson. "You were quite aware of the fact that I had stated privately I did not think it was wise to oppose Motherwell and in the face of that you put me in the position of making a declaration that can only be construed as a reversal of what I stated privately. I am quite certain yourself and Orchard could have prevented me being placed in this position." There was nothing to do now but support the Progressive against Motherwell, but Crerar feared that this would "of course make the Liberals fight in every constituency and ... may cost us several seats." (QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to R. M. Johnson, 27 October 1921.)

Co-operation with the Progressives had proven fruitless, even in Regina. Little now appeared to be lost by taking the offensive, and in the last weeks of the campaign the provincial Liberal organization was quietly thrown into the fight in every constituency where the Liberals were thought to have a chance of success.[172] While the provincial government, as a government, did not commit itself publicly to the support of any party, Martin's change of strategy did not go unnoticed. As T. A. Crerar put it in a letter to the head of the Liberal organization in Saskatchewan:

> During the four days I spent in Saskatchewan I found frequent expressions of opinion against members of the provincial government because of the active part they are taking in pushing the interests of some Liberal candidates as against Progressives. This invariably came to me from men who had supported the provincial government in the last election and some of whom had voted against independent candidates at that time. They felt that Premier Martin's declaration that the provincial government was dissociated entirely from the federal Liberal party entitled it to their support.
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> They also feel that the official grain growers association in Saskatchewan as far as it could do so at the time of and prior to the provincial election threw its influence against independent candidates opposing

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[172] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 7 December 1921; *Guide*, 14 December 1921. Martin subsequently denied that the provincial organization had been used against Progressive candidates in a letter to the *Grain Growers' Guide*, but did admit that government employees "... were free to support any candidate they chose in exactly the same way as every member of the government and every member of the legislature was entirely free, and they exercised that freedom." (*Guide*, 28 December 1921.) Martin's denial was challenged by one of the successful Progressive candidates in the province, M. N. Campbell, who claimed that employees of the provincial government had been active in his riding, employing "every means known to political science" to secure his defeat, "... and the character of the means was such that Tammany is snow white in comparison...." (*Ibid.*, 18 January 1922.)

> the Martin government and they resent now, and some of them very strongly, the attitude taken by some members of the government and particularly the local government organizations [*sic*] in going out actively against the Progressives...

Crerar suggested to Dunning in confidence that "... Mr. Martin when he speaks for Mr. Motherwell, should make it very clear that he is doing so as a citizen and should not attack the Progressive programme or platform, which by the way, in its main essentials, has I think, been approved at various times by your legislature."[173]

The Premier was bent on a different course. He had already spoken on Motherwell's behalf once in the campaign,[174] and less than a week before polling day he did so again. This time Martin did not throw his support only behind Motherwell, but called for the election of a Liberal government. He defended the Liberal record on the tariff and delivered a blistering attack against the Progressives for favouring group government and the initiative, referendum and recall which were inimical to the British parliamentary system of government. He criticized the Progressive platform in detail and declared that, because of their lack of experience, most Progressive leaders were unqualified to govern the country.[175] Reaction to the Premier's Regina speech was not long in coming. It resulted in the immediate resignation of J. A. Maharg and led to rumours that C. M. Hamilton, another Grain Grower, would resign from the cabinet as well.[176]

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[173] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to C. A. Dunning, 27 November 1921.

[174] *Leader*, 1 October 1921.

[175] *Ibid.*, 2 December 1921.

In his letter of resignation to the Premier, made public after the election was over, Maharg claimed that he had joined the provincial government on the understanding that his acceptance of office would not interfere with his duties as President of the S.G.G.A. or with his support of the Progressive party, and that in the latter connection he should feel he "had more or less the sympathy of the different members of ... [the] Government." The Premier's action in openly attacking the Progressive platform had violated the last term of the agreement, he charged, and left him no other choice but to resign at once from the cabinet. There were some newspapers in the province, notably the *Leader*, which claimed that Maharg was in fact alleging that he had made a "deal" with the Premier, agreeing to deliver the farmer vote to the Martin government in the recent provincial election in return for that government's support of the Progressives in the federal contest, and that he was now accusing Martin of failure to keep his part of the bargain,[177] but this Maharg emphatically denied.[178]

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[176] *Saskatoon Star*, 5 December 1921.

[177] *Leader*, 7 December 1921.

[178] SLAO, Sessional Papers, Session 1921-1922, No. 9, J. A. Maharg to W. M. Martin, 7 December 1921.

Martin defended his action on the basis of his belief in a complete separation of federal and provincial politics, and the freedom of each of his colleagues to support whomever he wished in the federal election.[179] Certainly, the Premier had given his colleagues a free rein,[180] but until almost the end of the federal election campaign he had done nothing to destroy the common impression that he was friendly with the Progressives. His sudden and, from the farmers' point of view, unexpected attack on the Progressive party made political sense only if it limited the farmers' electoral success in Saskatchewan and if Premier Martin was prepared to accept the consequences.[181] As it turned out, the Progressives virtually swept the province, taking fifteen of the sixteen seats, with W. R. Motherwell the only Liberal returned in Saskatchewan and one of only two elected anywhere on the prairies.[182] In throwing his support behind the Liberals, even if, as he claimed, he was only exercising the same privilege accorded to other members of the cabinet, he had antagonized the Grain Growers and their leaders. J. A. Maharg was convinced he had been deceived by the Premier. So too was J. B. Musselman, who hinted darkly at an S.G.G.A. district convention in December that "if in spite of our earnest efforts to keep provincial and federal politics free from each other, the Premier of this province will throw the weight of his Premiership into the support of a federal party, the electors will in future doubtless endeavor to assure themselves that the Premier's views on federal issues are in harmony with those of the electors who place him in power."[183]

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[179] *Ibid.*, W. M. Martin to J. A. Maharg, 7 December 1921.

[180] George Langley and J. A. Maharg had actively assisted Progressive candidates and Dunning and Latta had, like the Premier, spoken on behalf of W. R. Motherwell. (*Guide*, 28 September 1921; *Leader*, 1 October 1921, 10 November 1921.)

[181] Smith, p. 92.

[182] *Directory of Federal Elections*, p. 11; H. A. Scarrow, *Canada Votes: A Handbook of Federal and Provincial Election Data* (New Orleans: Hauser Press, 1962), p. 34.

Two influential Grain Growers had had a falling out with the provincial government in the space of two months, and as the M.L.A.'s assembled in Regina for the opening of the Legislature on 8 December, there were predictions that the session would witness "something of a crisis in Saskatchewan political affairs."[184] The leadership of the Independents was said to be Maharg's for the asking,[185] though he gave no indication that he would accept the honour if it was offered to him. When the province's new Lieutenant-Governor, H. W. Newlands, appeared in the chamber to read the Speech from the Throne, Maharg had taken his place to the left of the Speaker, but the Independents selected no one to serve as official leader during the session.[186] The sensational departure from the government of the two Grain Growers was given a thorough airing during the Throne Speech debate, but the discussion generated more heat than light. Maharg warned the House at the outset that "if they were looking for any fireworks he was going to disappoint them," for he had not crossed over to the other side to criticize the government or to discredit any member of it. The Premier continued to insist that he had not departed from his Preeceville declaration, and claimed that Maharg had resigned "because he could not force me and the whole of the government into the position where we were going to be a cog in the machine of a federal political party."[187]

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[183] *Saskatoon Star*, 14 December 1921.

[184] *Ibid.*, 9 December 1921.

[185] *Ibid.*, 8 December 1921.

[186] *Leader*, 9-10 December 1921, 12 December 1921.

To the Independents, the whole episode was proof of the evils of partyism, and Harris Turner delivered another sweeping indictment of the party system in his contribution to the debate. He believed, and so did those voters who had cast their ballots for Independent candidates on 9 June, that the affairs of the province ought to be administered in the same way as those of any large business. Parliamentary procedure ought to be changed so that the government need not resign if defeated in the Legislature on an "unimportant measure," and the government ought to "allow every question to be initiated on the floor of the House." The Liberals poured scorn on Turner's proposals. Premier Martin called them "destructive criticism designed to break down British institutions." One of the government back-benchers, George Spence of Notukeu, went farther. He informed the House that such theories had already been put into practice in Russia, and questioned whether the people of Saskatchewan wanted the kind of government to be found in that country.[188]

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[187] *Ibid.*, 14 December 1921, 17 December 1921.

There was no "political crisis" such as the *Saskatoon Star* had predicted. Apart from Maharg's defection, the government's strength remained intact, and indeed increased when D. J. Sykes, the Independent M.L.A. for Swift Current and W. G. Baker, the Labour member elected in one of the Moose Jaw seats, announced their intention to support the Martin government.[189] The session was not a particularly lengthy one, for the Liberals were anxious to have the sittings over before the annual S.G.G.A. convention in order that members of the House, the majority of whom belonged to the farmers' organization, would be able to attend.[190] What little new legislation the government brought down, the most notable being a bill to establish a Bureau of Child Protection,[191] was approved with dispatch.

The Legislature seemed far more concerned about the plight of Saskatchewan farmers, as well it might, for the full impact of the postwar depression had become only too evident by the winter of

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[188] *Ibid.*, 13 December 1921, 16 December 1921.

[189] *Ibid.*, 10 December 1921.

[190] *Daily Post*, 9 January 1922.

[191] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 12 Geo. V, Chapter 15.

1921. There had been another disastrous decline in wheat prices following the harvesting of the 1921 crop, and the situation was further aggravated by the restriction of the American market under the 35 per cent duty imposed by the Fordney Tariff.[192] The Martin government, like governments everywhere at the time, regarded this postwar economic slump as a natural and inevitable phenomenon, brought about by factors over which local authorities could exercise little if any influence.[193] Holding such views, the government had confined its efforts to ameliorating the distress caused by the depression without seeking to interefere in any way with the economic cycle itself.

One example of this economic orthodoxy was to be found in the government's response to appeals from farmers for a moratorium. By 1921 not a few farmers were finding it impossible to meet the payments of principal and interest on the land and machinery which they had purchased to increase production during the war and postwar boom. Harrassed by his creditors, many a debt-burdened farmer now found that the loss of his farm through foreclosure was a grim possibility. One remedy lay in the government exercising the authority granted it in 1914 to declare a moratorium on foreclosure and the legal collection of debts. This was a remedy which the government was reluctant to adopt, for it believed, as the Premier told the House, that such a drastic step would impair the credit of the province for years. Instead, it had been attempting to mediate in individual cases between a farmer and his creditors in the hope of securing a settlement acceptable to both parties.[194]

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[192] *Agriculture Report*, 1922, pp. 9-10, 303-304; *Budget Speech*, 31 January 1922, pp. 5-8.

[193] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. B. Packard, 1 March 1921, pp. 16531-32.

Taking this approach one step farther, the Premier had chaired a conference in November 1921 attended by members of the commercial and farming interests of the province. The whole question of the collection of debts had been discussed in detail, and Martin had warned the banks and the implement, lumber and mortgage companies that the government was fully prepared to use its moratorium powers to deal with individual cases where such action might be warranted. The Premier was able to report to the House that the various classes of creditors represented at this conference had indicated a willingness to deal leniently with all cases brought to their attention. There was general agreement among Liberal and Opposition members alike that this was, as the Premier put it, "a more proper course to pursue than the establishment of a general moratorium which would have been nothing less than an admission that the province was bankrupt,"[195] but the government had not heard the last of this question. As the depression fastened its grip ever more tightly upon Saskatchewan, the pressure from hard-pressed farmers for a general moratorium to ease their burden of indebtedness was to become well nigh irresistible.

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[194] *Leader*, 13 December 1921.

[195] *Ibid.*, 12 November 1921, 13-15 December 1921, 17 December 1921.

There was also a lengthy debate on the question of wheat marketing, with the Legislature unanimously approving a resolution in favour of the re-establishment of the Canada Wheat Board to handle the 1922 crop.[196] Wheat Board sentiment in Saskatchewan had been influenced considerably by the report submitted in May 1921 by James Stewart and F. W. Riddell, whose opinions the government had taken such pains to solicit on the eve of the 1921 S.G.G.A. convention. In order to provide some direction to their inquiry, Premier Martin had posed a number of questions to these two prominent grain men. The first, and most important, asked whether it was possible for any kind of pool comprising less than the whole of the western wheat crop to market that crop to the same advantage from the farmers' point of view as the Wheat Board had done. Their answer, in a word, was no. To be successful, a centralized wheat marketing agency would have to be national in scope, as the Wheat Board had been. As for a pool handling only a portion of the western crop, Stewart and Riddell gave it as their opinion that a voluntary co-operative scheme would be preferable to one bound by the provisions of a legal contract.[197] The real meaning of their findings was obvious though unstated: a revived

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[196] *Ibid.*, 20 January 1922, 26-27 January 1922.

[197] Saskatchewan, *Report to the Government of Saskatchewan on Wheat Marketing* (Regina: King's Printer, 1921), pp. 3, 9-20.

Wheat Board promised greater benefit to western farmers than the voluntary contract pool which the Canadian Council of Agriculture then had under consideration.

It is difficult to believe that this whole exercise had been intended simply to, as the Premier put it in his instructions to Stewart and Riddell, "procure accurate information of an educational character for the people of the Province generally ...."[198] Several members of the government were known to be cool to the idea of a voluntary contract pool. C. A. Dunning, whose knowledge of the grain business was greater than any of his colleagues, was particularly suspicious of this "wheat pool talk" as he called it, believing that it only served to divert the farmers from continued pressure for the re-establishment of the Wheat Board.[199] By publicly casting doubt on the feasibility of the scheme which the Canadian Council of Agriculture had advanced, the Liberals may have hoped to channel agrarian opinion in the province in more acceptable directions, and put additional pressure on Ottawa to revive the Wheat Board. Whether this was their intent or not, by the fall of 1921 Saskatchewan farmers were talking of nothing else,[200] and at the end of the year even the Council had abandoned its pool scheme to devote all its energies to securing the re-establishment of the Wheat Board.[201]

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[198] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

[199] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to L. Gabriel, 27 January 1921, p. 27807; Dunning to J. D. Balbirnie, 12 March 1921, p. 27842.

[200] *Leader*, 22 October 1921, 26 October 1921; AS, W. M. Martin Papers, Gowanbrae G.G.A. to Martin, 15 November 1921,

By the time the Legislature expressed its support for the restoration of the Wheat Board, in January 1922, the goal seemed much closer to achievement. Western voters had elected thirty-eight representatives of the new Progressive party to Parliament in the recent federal election, and it appeared that the new Liberal government of William Lyon Mackenzie King, without even a bare majority in the House, would be willing to listen to the farmers' demands. The next move lay with Ottawa, but before the summer was out the provincial Legislature would be taking practical steps to assist in recreating the Wheat Board as the marketing agency for Saskatchewan's and western Canada's staple product.

The thorny problem of enforcing the Saskatchewan Temperance Act also came in for its share of attention during the 1921-1922 session of the Legislature. Prohibition certainly was not realizing all the hopes of those who had brought it into being, and developments during the session were to provide further evidence of the growing public disenchantment with the whole policy. As ever, one of the chief obstacles to the enforcement of the law remained the export warehouses in the south country which appeared

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pp. 33372-73; QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, R. M. Johnson to Crerar, 15 November 1921.

[201] *Leader*, 22 December 1921.

to exist, one M.L.A. from that area observed, "for no other purpose but to enable the Jews controlling them to roll up large profits."[202] For the second consecutive year the Legislature unanimously passed a resolution introduced by Robert Dunbar, Liberal member for Estevan, demanding that the federal government declare the export traffic illegal and put these warehouses out of business.[203] Though the Martin government continued to insist that it was powerless to do so itself, it did introduce a number of amendments to the province's prohibition law designed to at least make it more difficult for these "boozoriums," as they were now popularly known, to carry on their operations. One restricted the export houses to cities with a population of over 10,000, thereby limiting them to Moose Jaw, Regina, and Saskatoon, away from close proximity to the United States border.[204] Another confined the transportation of liquor within the province to common carrier, making it illegal to transport liquor by automobile, the favorite method employed by rum runners.[205] A third increased the annual tax on export warehouses operating in the province from $1,000 to $5,000.[206]

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[202] *Ibid.*, 16 December 1921. He was referring, of course, to the Bronfman brothers, Harry and Sam, who had come to dominate the export liquor business in the province. A detailed account of their rise to prominence may be found in J. H. Gray, *Booze: The Impact of Whisky on the Prairie West* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1972), pp. 109-49.

[203] *Journals*, 1921-1922, pp. 45-46.

[204] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 12 Geo. V, Chapter 76, sec. 5.

[205] *Ibid.*

The Opposition by and large supported these efforts to end the worst abuses of the export traffic, but not all agreed with the government's contention that it lacked the authority to eradicate the traffic completely. J. P. Gordon, the Conservative M.L.A. for Souris, claimed that the provincial government had the power to determine conditions under which liquor for export could be kept in Saskatchewan. He pointed to the example of Manitoba, where the government had enacted legislation confining liquor kept for export purposes to bonded warehouses. Since the federal authorities did not issue licences for bonded warehouses without the approval of the provincial government, and since Manitoba did not grant this approval, there were no export warehouses in Manitoba. Premier Martin did not agree. He was convinced that "... the Federal Parliament is ... the only authority which can stop the existence of the export house and render it impossible to export liquor in exactly the same way as it was necessary for the federal authority to intervene in connection with the question of importation." The provision in the Manitoba law which limited export liquor to bonded warehouses had not been tested in the courts, but Martin believed that it was unconstitutional.[207] His own reservations notwithstanding, the Premier did subsequently announce that the government was prepared to introduce a similar provision as an amendment to the Saskatchewan Temperance Act.[208] The amendment was approved by the Legislature, but then was withdrawn a week later after the Premier repeated his doubts as to its constitutionality.[209]

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[206] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 12 Geo. V, Chapter 21.

[207] *Leader*, 14 January 1922.

Among the other seventeen amendments introduced during the session to strengthen the Saskatchewan Temperance Act was one empowering the police to search for liquor at any time and in any place except a dwelling house.[210] This amendment a group of influential Regina citizens regarded as far too stringent, and they met with the Premier and members of his cabinet on 16 January to register their objections. In their opinion the province's prohibition law had been given a fair trial, and the people of Saskatchewan were not satisfied with the wave of bootlegging and illicit distilling which had resulted. Their pleas that the government put an end to these conditions by taking over the purchase and sale of liquor were to no avail, for the Premier announced that his government had no intention of changing its policy in this matter.[211] The *Leader*, in commenting on this request, moved away from its previous position of unqualified support of the government's liquor policy. It too declared that the law had proved itself to be unenforceable after a fair trial, and that the time had arrived when "the province must choose between the legalized selling of liquor and the continuation of the present unsatisfactory conditions that exist ...."[212] Slowly but inexorably, opposition to prohibition was gaining ground in the province. There was still no organized campaign to force another vote on this contentious issue, but neither was there any longer that unanimity of support upon which successful enforcement of the prohibition law depended.

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[208] *Ibid.*, 31 January 1922.

[209] *Ibid.*, 1 February 1922, 8 February 1922.

[210] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 12 Geo. V, Chapter 76, sec. 10.

[211] *Leader*, 17 January 1922. The delegation consisted of Rev. T. J. MacMahon, Principal of Campion College; H. G. Smith; A. G. MacKinnon; A. T. Hunter, secretary of the Regina Branch of the Great War Veterans' Association; and two lawyers, Major C. E. Gregory, counsel for the S.G.G.A., and P. M. Anderson.

The Legislature wound up its business on 9 February.[213] Four days later the Grain Growers' convention, "the most important parliament in the province,"[214] opened in Regina. From the outset it was clear that one issue would overshadow all others, as the S.G.G.A., annoyed by Premier Martin's unexpected intervention on the side of the Liberals in the recent federal election, revived its discussion of provincial political action. The debate on the question, which had been forestalled in 1920 and 1921, had a different tone this time. J. A. Maharg and J. B. Musselman, neither of whom had previously been in favour of the farmers' organization entering the provincial field, were now among its most enthusiastic supporters. So too was George Langley, out of politics but still piqued at what he regarded as the Premier's high-handed action in forcing his resignation from the government. The same sentiments were shared by a majority of the nine hundred-odd delegates present, and early in the convention the following resolution was approved by a near-unanimous vote:

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[212] *Ibid.*

[213] *Ibid.*, 10 February 1922.

[214] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1922, p. 13.

> WHEREAS we hold it to be the duty of all citizens to interest themselves in all matters of government and to express themselves by the exercise of their franchise in elections, and
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> WHEREAS for effectual expression they must group themselves according to the principles and purposes they hold in common, and
>
> WHEREAS while facilities have been provided for expression of our common political principles federally, no such provision has been made provincially;
>
> NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that this convention favors taking the necessary steps to provide for the organization of the supporters of these common principles and objects for provincial election purposes.[215]

In contrast with more precise resolutions which were not adopted, this one did not indicate whether the S.G.G.A. would itself organize a provincial party, or whether the task would be entrusted to an independent body, as had been done in 1919 when the farmers decided to enter the federal field. Those delegates who wished to see the Grain Growers take political action as an Association pointed to the example of Alberta, for the success of the U.F.A., both as a farmers' and a political organization was striking when compared to the rather serious decline in the strength of the

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[215] *Ibid.*, pp. 63-67.

S.G.G.A. that had been taking place since 1920.[216] Those who did not argued that if the S.G.G.A. itself became a politically active body it would alienate members who could not support its political principles, and convey the impression that the new party wished to restrict its appeal to a single occupational group in the province. Others argued that it would be foolish to establish any political organization until the convention had had an opportunity to discuss the common principles on which it would appeal for support.[217]

The most striking reversal of opinion on this subject came from the Secretary, J. B. Musselman, who revealed to the convention the methods he had employed in 1919 to swing the S.G.G.A. away from direct participation in politics. He told the delegates that he had wished to keep the Progressive party separate from the farmers' organization, to ensure that the party did not become simply a farmers' party in the public mind, and to protect the S.G.G.A. from possible unpopular actions by Progressive members at Ottawa. In fact, though, as Musselman readily admitted, "... 85 per cent of our people all over the province and 100 per cent in all the other provinces do conceive that the Grain Growers' Association went into federal politics .... We have never been able to escape ...

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[216] The membership of the S.G.G.A. had declined from 35,000 in 1920 to 28,000 in 1921. (AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1921, p. 119). No figures were given out at the 1922 convention, but it was reported in the press that there had been a further drop to 21,000 by 1922. (*Saskatoon Star*, 20 February 1922.)

[217] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1922, pp. 67-72, 76-84, 92-93.

responsibility of this new political body." This being the case, Musselman urged the delegates not to make the same mistake again:

> You have decided that the Grain Growers' Association is to go into provincial politics .... Since you are committed to provincial political action - and you are committed by the resolution you have just passed - I recommend to you that you go the whole way and organize a political body (which will represent the thing you stand for) within the association .... If you do this you will have a Grain Growers' Association which will represent those farmers who hold these common principles - a definite something; but if you organize another political body over which you have no control - you will have nothing.[218]

Against this there was the equally impassioned address of "Charlie" Dunning, whose last-minute appeal to the convention mirrored the anxiety of the Liberals:

> I came here to plead ... that this Grain Growers' Association be saved alive for all the farmers of Saskatchewan. The men who founded it had an ideal that the only way it would be possible to work toward common action would be to form an organization big enough in its conception to admit men of every race, religion, creed and political color. Don't run away and say I told you not to take political action but do save alive an organization in Saskatchewan where all farmers can meet and discuss their present problems ... I don't care about your proposal to form a political association ... provided the Association to which all of us can come is left intact. Kick me out politically if you wish, that is your privilege, but do not debar a man who may not agree with your particular political movement from belonging to a farmers' organization.[219]

The convention was not won over by Dunning's arguments. After two days' discussion the Grain Growers finally agreed on a resolution authorizing the Central Board to create a committee to assist provincial constituencies to organize themselves for provincial political action.[220]

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[218] *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

[219] *Ibid.*, p. 81.

Once again, the delegates had given wide discretionary powers to the executive to interpret their wishes. This was not surprising, but it was bound to create difficulties for the S.G.G.A. on account of the growing objection among some members of the farmers' organization to the virtual monopoly control of its highest executive offices by Maharg, Musselman and their cohorts. Antagonism toward the entrenched leadership of the Grain Growers had first become apparent at the 1921 convention in Moose Jaw, and it was again very much in evidence the following year. A. J. McPhail, a Ladstock farmer who was to play an increasingly prominent role in the S.G.G.A., introduced an amendment to the constitution providing that "no one having held the office of President or Vice-President for four consecutive years immediately preceding should be eligible for re-election." It was defeated by a large majority, but another barring members of the federal or provincial government from office in the Association nearly carried.[221] More dramatic was the defeat of A. G. Hawkes in his ninth bid for re-election to the vice-presidency of the S.G.G.A. In his place the delegates chose George F. Edwards, another rising star in the farmers' movement who, by his own admission, had agreed to run chiefly because he "felt it would be necessary to get rid of the sinister influence exercised by J. B. Musselman ...."[222] The seeds of division were already planted in the S.G.G.A. by the time it took the fateful step and entered provincial politics. What success it might enjoy in the provincial arena would depend on the leadership of a group of men whose control of the farmers' movement was already being challenged from within, as well as on the efforts of the Liberal government at Regina to restore the confidence destroyed by Martin.

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[220] *Ibid.*, p. 93.

[221] *Ibid.*, pp. 87-91; *McPhail Diary*, p. 23.

Premier Martin realized himself that he had lost the support of the farmers and was making preparations to resign. A new seat was created on the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal and he was to be appointed to the vacant judgeship. The only man who could stem the rising tide of agrarian unrest that threatened to sweep away the Saskatchewan Liberal regime appeared to be Charles A. Dunning, the thirty-seven year old Provincial Treasurer and Minister of Municipal Affairs.[223] Dunning's qualifications were certainly impressive. As a freshman cabinet minister in 1916 his political talents had been an unknown quantity, but on the hustings and in the Legislature Dunning had soon proven himself a tireless worker and a match for anyone in debate. More important, from the standpoint of the government and the Liberal party, was Dunning's record as a farm leader. The Grain Growers and the Liberals had always maintained a close working relationship in the past, and with the elevation of Dunning to the premiership, the organized farmers would be able to boast that one of their number held the reins of power in Saskatchewan. The strategy was sound, but the recent S.G.G.A. convention had demonstrated that there were many farmers who no longer regarded an avowed Liberal like Dunning as the best representative of their interests.

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[222] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1922, p. 117; K. Edwards, ed., *Memoirs of George F. Edwards* (Ottawa, n.p., 1968), p. 18.

[223] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 31 December 1921; W. L. M. King Papers, W. M. Martin to King, 27 January 1922, pp. 66104-105; same to same, 10 March 1922, p. 66117. The prospect of Martin being appointed to the bench aroused bitter feeling among those Liberals who had not seen eye to eye with the Premier over the years. W. E. Knowles wrote to Mackenzie King that the appointment would be resented by "all faithful Liberals" since there was "no man, not even including Mr. Calder, who has so contributed to the wrecking of the Federal Liberal Party in this Province as has Mr. Martin." (PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, W. E. Knowles to King,

The actual transfer of leadership took place in Regina on 4 April 1922. The M.L.A.'s met in caucus in the afternoon and unanimously chose Dunning as the new leader of the Liberal party. Their selection was endorsed by a larger gathering of party supporters in the evening. At one point during this second meeting the name of S. J. Latta, like Dunning a long time M.L.A. and cabinet minister, was put forward in nomination. At Latta's own request the nomination was withdrawn, and the choice of Dunning

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28 February 1922, pp. 64067-68.) George Langley, still bitter over his enforced resignation from the government, also wrote to the Prime Minister to protest Martin's appointment, and at least one prominent Regina lawyer objected that Martin lacked sufficient legal experience to be considered for an appointment to the bench. (*Ibid.*, J. F. Frame to King, 27 March 1922, pp. 62266-68; QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, G. Langley to W. L. M. King, March 1922).

was made unanimous.[224]

The new Premier decided to meet the Grain Growers' political movement head on. In his acceptance speech Dunning announced to the party faithful that he had been chosen to head the provincial Liberal party. This did not mean that he was "under marching orders from now on to go out and fight the farmers of this province," for he believed that the bulk of Saskatchewan farmers and the bulk of the members of the S.G.G.A. were Liberals. Just because "a member of very consummate politicians" were seeking to steal the machinery of the farmers' organization to use it for their own political purposes was "no reason why we should make the mistake of fighting the whole institution."[225] Having made his own position clear to Liberals and farmers alike, Saskatchewan's third Premier wasted little time in getting down to business.

Dunning's first task was the selection of a cabinet. This was done at once, and he and his six colleagues were sworn in on 5 April 1922. Again, as in 1916, the new cabinet was little changed from its predecessor. Four of its members had served under Martin: Dunning, of course, who retained the portfolio of Provincial Treasurer and took that of Railways as well; A. P. McNab, Minister of Public Works and Minister of Telephones and Telegraphs; S. J. Latta, Minister of Education and C. M. Hamilton, Minister of

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[224] *Leader*, 5 April 1922.

[225] *Ibid.*

Agriculture and Minister of Municipal Affairs. The others were newcomers. Col. J. A. Cross, a distinguished war veteran and the sole lawyer in the Legislature, was the logical, and indeed the only, choice for the post of Attorney-General. J. G. Gardiner's growing influence within the party was recognized by his elevation to the Highways portfolio, an appointment which was to give him the opportunity to develop his not inconsiderable talent for political organization, and Dr. J. M. Uhrich was named Provincial Secretary.[226] It was significant that although a farmer now led the government, his cabinet contained no other prominent Grain Growers, for political conditions in Saskatchewan had changed dramatically since J. A. Maharg had entered and quickly left the Martin government the year before.

Dunning reaffirmed his political position in a manifesto to the people of Saskatchewan issued shortly after he assumed office. His government intended to follow a "sane, progressive, Liberal" course in administering the affairs of the province. He urged the people to support the government in carrying out its announced programme, a programme which included "vigorous enforcement of the Saskatchewan Temperance Act in accordance with the expressed will of the people," assistance to agriculture, better educational facilities and the extension of the provincial highways and telephone systems to meet the needs of a growing province. The new Premier also addressed a special appeal to the S.G.G.A.:

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[226] *Legislative Directory*, p. 10. Uhrich also became Minister of Public Health when that portfolio was created in 1923.

> It is my sincere hope that this farmers' organization, to which this province owes so much, and to which personally I owe a debt of gratitude for past opportunities of service, will not set up, either actually or by implication, a political test for membership. However that may be, I feel that on the basis of record and policies both myself and the government have at least an equal right to appeal for the support of the farmers of Saskatchewan with those who are opposed to the government in the legislature, whether they be members of the Grain Growers' Association or not.[227]

The Premier soon discovered that his stress on the word "Liberal" was being misunderstood. He did not mean to suggest, as the Herman newspapers in Regina and Saskatoon charged,[228] that he intended to reverse the policy laid down by his predecessor in 1920 and re-establish the link with the federal Liberals. He had used the word to denote a certain set of political policies, and did not intend, by defining his government as a "Liberal" government, to defend Mackenzie King's actions at Ottawa.[229] In any event, Dunning soon took steps to mollify the Grain Growers. Shortly after he took office, for example, he asked the S.G.G.A. executive for copies of all resolutions passed at the annual conventions since

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[227] *Guide*, 26 April 1922.

[228] *Saskatoon Star*, 10 April 1922; *Daily Post*, 12 April 1922.

[229] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to G. F. Chipman, 12 April 1922, pp. 35590-91.

1918,[230] presumably as a guide for future policies. Dunning could not expect that his efforts to win back the agrarian support lost by Martin would bear fruit at once, of course, but his approach was certainly a shrewd one. Clearly he hoped to discredit the move to provincial political action through the S.G.G.A. without seeming to discredit the farmers' organization itself. Only by such tactics, while at the same time disavowing, temporarily at least, any association with Mackenzie King and the federal Liberals, could Dunning hope to retrieve the situation in Saskatchewan.

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[230] *Ibid.*, J. B. Musselman to Dunning, 9 June 1922, p. 40376.

CHAPTER VIII

THE FARMERS IN POLITICS, 1922-1925

While the Liberals were busying themselves with the selection of a new leader, the S.G.G.A. executive was also active. The Central Board had decided a few days after the 1922 convention to constitute itself as the committee it had been instructed to appoint for the purpose of assisting locals in organizing for provincial political action, and J. A. Maharg issued a manifesto outlining some of the plans and principles which would guide the committee in its work. Full responsibility for choosing, electing and financing candidates was to be placed upon the locals in individual constituencies. The new political movement was to be open to all citizens irrespective of class or occupation. The S.G.G.A. intended to begin at once an aggressive campaign to revive dormant locals and establish new ones in order to "... perfect the organization of the Association in all parts of the province and ... [provide] the necessary organization for the locals to nominate their own choice of candidates to support the principles and objects of the Association in the next provincial election."[1]

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[1] Saskatchewan Grain Growers' Association, *Manefesto* [*sic*] *On Provincial Political Action* (Regina, n.p., 1922); *Guide*, 8 March 1922.

That election might not come for some time, the government having been returned with a comfortable majority only the year before, but an opportunity for a test of strength between the farmers and the Liberals presented itself in a series of by-elections during the summer of 1922. Under the law of the day Cross, Gardiner and Uhrich, the three new ministers, were required to seek re-election. The death of the sitting member for Happyland shortly before Dunning took office necessitated the holding of a by-election in that riding, and George Langley's departure from the government and the Legislature left Cumberland without a spokesman in the House. Later in the summer another vacancy was created in Regina with the resignation of W. M. Martin to take his long-delayed retreat to the bench.[2]

The new Premier voiced a cautious optimism that his government would carry the by-elections with ease.[3] As it turned out, his caution was quite unnecessary, for the Grain Growers contested only two of the seats. In North Qu'Appelle a candidate was nominated to run against the new Minister of Highways, who was no friend of the Progressives and had made no secret of the fact. Even so, the locals in Gardiner's riding were apparently not all in favour of provincial political action, and the candidate withdrew at the last moment.[4] This Dunning regretted, for he had hoped that a convincing victory in a seat like North Qu'Appelle would scotch the efforts of what he termed a "political clique" to turn the S.G.G.A. into a political machine.[5]

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[2] Martin's appointment to the bench had not come at once as had been expected. After much waiting, and several letters to Ottawa, the Premier himself finally wrote to Mackenzie King in mid-July explaining the need for haste. With a special session of the Legislature about to be held to deal with the wheat marketing question, the former Premier was more than a little embarrassed at the "idea of being a Member of the Legislature still when the whole Province expects to see him appointed to the Bench almost immediately." (PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 18 July 1922, p. 61651.) The appointment was made almost at once. (*Leader*, 24 July 1922.)

[3] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to T. H. Johnson, 8 April 1922, p. 35516; PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, C. A. Dunning to Cameron, 12 April 1922.

The only open fight between the Grain Growers and the government in 1922 took place in Happyland, a constituency ravaged by poor crops and an area in which the radical Nonpartisan League had been active. The S.G.G.A. locals in the riding had decided in March to nominate a candidate, and steps were taken at once to create an organization and collect campaign funds. In accordance with the policy laid down at the recent S.G.G.A. convention, and reiterated in Maharg's manifesto, the responsibility for managing the campaign lay entirely with the locals.[6] Though he took no active part in the fight, Musselman provided what helpful encouragement he could, for the S.G.G.A. secretary believed that "now that the provincial government is out and out a Liberal government and its premier the leader of the Liberal party for Saskatchewan, the issue is pre-eminently a fight for self-preservation between the Progressives and the Liberals of this province."[7]

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[4] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, J. B. Musselman to R. McSweeney, 3 April 1922; J. B. Musselman to G. M. Hallem, 13 April 1922; Violet McNaughton Papers, J. B. Musselman to G. F. Edwards, 30 May 1922.

[5] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. Scott, 17 July 1922, pp. 44652-53.

[6] *Guide*, 12 April 1922; AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, J. B. Musselman to J. Davis, 28 April 1922.

Dunning's first speech at Cabri set the keynote for the Liberal campaign. He denied that he was out to fight the Grain Growers, and pointed to his own record of service to the agricultural community, as secretary of his local, district director and vice-president of the S.G.G.A. The Premier claimed that efforts were being made to turn every local in Happyland into a political machine, and predicted that the only result would be the disintegration of the local. Ever since the S.G.G.A. had begun to dabble in politics, Dunning reminded his audience, its membership had been dwindling.[8] The Liberals left nothing to chance during the campaign, and the entire cabinet toured the riding.[9] The systematic organization that had long been a hallmark of Liberal campaigns in the province again proved its worth: the Liberal was elected, though by a smaller majority than his predecessor had obtained in 1921.[10]

Dunning had good reason to be grateful for the outcome of these first contests with the Grain Growers' political movement, especially considering the dire predictions that had been made in some quarters regarding the fate of his government. He confessed to Walter Scott that many had regarded it as "a last forlorn hope to attempt to stand against the wave of farmer political organization, particularly when, on assuming office, I made it perfectly plain that the Government would be a Liberal Government." The acclamations and the result in Happyland had, of course, changed all that, and he now expected to be able to carry on for "quite a time to come."[11] The result of the by-elections in Cumberland and Regina gave Dunning further reason for optimism. A Liberal won in the former seat over two other Liberal candidates, and in Regina the government candidate was returned without opposition.[12] In the six by-elections held since Dunning assumed office, then, six Liberals had been elected, four of them by acclamation. To be sure, the Grain Growers had not seriously considered contesting the by-elections in Regina, or in the far northern riding of Cumberland, or in Rosthern, where Dr. Uhrich had a strong personal following among its largely German-speaking population.[13] In Happyland, on the other hand, the advantage did not lie so heavily with the government, but even here the hastily constructed farmer political organization proved no match for the Liberals.[14] The lesson for the S.G.G.A. was clear, as W. F. Herman pointed out in the *Saskatoon Star:*

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[7] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, J. B. Musselman to G. Hallem, 13 April 1922.

[8] *Leader*, 15 June 1922.

[9] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to G. W. Sahlmark, 12 June 1922, p. 2740.

[10] *Legislative Directory*, p. 106.

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[11] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. Scott, 17 July 1922, p. 44658.

[12] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 99, 134.

[13] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, J. B. Musselman to R. McSweeney, 3 April 1922.

> The Dunning government makes a strong appeal to a considerable section of the electors. It will not be beaten except by a thoroughly organized and well led party, supporting a real political platform.[15]

Time and circumstances might well tip the scales in favour of the Grain Growers, but for the present at least the political position of the Saskatchewan Liberal regime and its new leader was secure.

Politics was not the new government's only concern when it assumed office in April 1922. Declining grain prices and poor economic conditions generally had struck hard at the "Wheat Province." In his first public appearances as Premier, Dunning attempted to sound a note of optimism. He told one audience in Regina that as a province producing the necessities of life, Saskatchewan would be among the first to recover when economic conditions in Canada and overseas began to improve. At another he boasted that Saskatchewan was "a great next-year country" and that this spirit of "looking forward" would bring it through its present difficulties.[16] This was cold comfort to the province's hard-pressed farming population. Higher prices, not platitudes, were what they desired, and they looked to Ottawa and Regina to assist in improving the economic lot of the man on the land.

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[14] *Saskatoon Star*, 20 June 1922; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to H. A. Robson, 29 June 1922, p. 49515.

[15] *Saskatoon Star*, 27 June 1922.

[16] *Leader*, 7-8 April 1922.

The remedy favoured by most farmers was, of course, the re-establishment of the Canada Wheat Board, whose operations they still associated with the highest prices in their experience. Prairie farmers had urged without success that the Wheat Board be revived in 1920, and had considered a voluntary pooling scheme and rejected it in 1921. Now they turned again in 1922 to the hope of a new Wheat Board. The first step in re-establishing the Wheat Board took place in Ottawa. After weeks of hearings, the House of Commons Committee on Agriculture recommended on 14 June that a national wheat marketing agency be created to handle the 1922 crop, the legislation to take effect "as soon as two or more of the provinces have conferred upon this agency such powers possessed by the Wheat Board of 1919 as come within provincial jurisdiction."[17] Dunning was already convinced, even before the report was made public, that the federal government should move quickly to introduce the appropriate legislation. Otherwise, he warned W. R. Motherwell, now Minister of Agriculture in the King government, the Progressives would become the "Wheat Board Party" and use this "perpetual grievance" to garner support among western farmers, most of whom favoured the re-establishment of this compulsory marketing scheme.[18]

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[17] Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, 1922, Vol. III, p. 2915.

The government's opponents in the Legislature were quick to call on Premier Dunning to introduce the necessary provincial legislation.[19] Dunning waited until the Committee's report was made public. Then, during the by-election campaign in Happyland, he announced that if a Wheat Board similar to that of 1919 could be created his government would call a special session of the Legislature to deal with the matter.[20] Once the federal legislation had been approved by Parliament, Premier Dunning and his Alberta counterpart, Herbert Greenfield, met in Regina to discuss possible action by their respective governments. They also consulted with James Stewart, president of the Maple Leaf Milling Company, and F. W. Riddell, general manager of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, the men who had headed the 1919 Wheat Board. At the conclusion of the day-long conference Dunning announced that his government was prepared to call a special session, but would wait for Alberta's decision before deciding definitely to do so.[21]

The Greenfield government agreed to co-operate and Dunning took the opportunity of writing Prime Minister King regarding the whole Wheat Board question. The Saskatchewan Premier confided that he did not like the principle of compulsion in matters of trade, but present economic conditions made some sort of mass selling desirable if the farmer was to receive a reasonable price for his wheat. Dunning was sure the supplementary legislation would pass easily, since the M.L.A.'s and farmers generally were "practically a unit in favour of the scheme." The federal legislation provided that Ottawa would assume no responsibility for any deficits which the Board might incur, but the Premier saw no real problem in this, provided suitable men were found to head the Board. In this connection he suggested the names of James Stewart and F. W. Riddell, and assured King that the governments of the two provinces would be perfectly satisfied with a Wheat Board headed by these men.[22]

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[18] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. R. Motherwell, 22 May 1922, pp. 47064-66.

[19] *Ibid.*, G. W. Robertson to Dunning, 29 May 1922, pp. 48504-505.

[20] *Leader*, 15 June 1922.

[21] *Ibid.*, 11 July 1922.

The special session of the Saskatchewan Legislature which Dunning had promised opened on 20 July 1922. It was the Premier himself who introduced the Wheat Board bill next day.[23] Dunning carefully weighed all the elements involved in what he termed "this experiment" and compared the powers of the proposed Wheat Board with those exercised by its predecessor. The most significant difference lay in the fact that the 1919 Board had been national in scope. It had controlled all the wheat grown in Canada, it had controlled flour, and it had been backed financially by the credit of the federal government. The absence of these powers might prove a handicap to the new Board, he admitted, but the provincial government had taken every precaution in drafting the legislation to meet such contingencies. The absence of Manitoba might also present difficulties, though he did not believe that it would imperil the success of the Wheat Board, for that province accounted for only one-sixth of the wheat acreage of western Canada. Nevertheless, he hoped that the newly-elected government of Manitoba would find it possible to pass the necessary legislation and join in the scheme.[24]

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[22] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 18 July 1922, pp. 61651-54.

[23] *Leader*, 22 July 1922.

The S.G.G.A. and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company had already pledged their full co-operation.[25] The bill was supported by J. A. Maharg and the other Independent members in the House and, as Dunning had predicted to Mackenzie King, it passed easily.[26] The Alberta Legislature had also been called into special session and there remained only the problem of securing competent men to head the new Wheat Board. The responsibility for nominating these men was placed squarely on the Premiers of the participating provinces.[27] Dunning took the initiative in recommending to the federal government that Stewart and Riddell be asked to head the Board, and suggested to Greenfield that they meet later to discuss nominations for the balance of the Board.[28] Stewart and Riddell declined to serve and Dunning wired Ottawa urging that the two be asked to reconsider. Dunning refused to submit other names until definitely convinced that Stewart and Riddell would not agree to serve.[29] The Premiers even sent a joint wire urging them to accept, but it had no effect.[30]

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[24] *Ibid.*, 25 July 1922.

[25] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, W. C. Mills to Dunning, 19 July 1922, pp. 47536-37; *Leader*, 20 July 1922.

[26] *Leader*, 26-27 July 1922.

With the final refusal of Stewart and Riddell, the two Premiers wired Mackenzie King from Calgary on 6 August setting forth alternative nominations for chairman and vice-chairman.[31] H. W. Wood, president of the U.F.A., and C. Rice-Jones, vice-president of the United Grain Growers Limited, the Premiers' second choices, were persuaded to come to Winnipeg for a meeting with Premier Greenfield, J. A. Cross and A. P. McNab of the Saskatchewan government, and several other prominent grain men. Wood and Rice-Jones refused in the end to accept either position, though both were apparently willing to sit on the Board. James Richardson was then approached to take the chairmanship, but he too refused. Before the meeting broke up it was agreed that the chief executive positions on the Board should next be offered to John R. MacFarlane of the Alberta Pacific Grain Company and James R. Murray of the United Grain Growers.[32] This was done but, like the others, they declined the offer.[33] After two hectic weeks of negotiations Premiers Dunning and Greenfield finally gave up their search and on 14 August sent a telegram to Ottawa reporting their failure.[34] The reasons for their failure they summarized in a public statement issued that evening:

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[27] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, F. C. T. O'Hara to Dunning, 28 July 1922, p. 48216.

[28] *Ibid.*, Dunning to F. C. T. O'Hara, 29 July 1922, p. 48217; Dunning to H. Greenfield, 29 July 1922, p. 48218.

[29] *Ibid.*, W. C. Kennedy to Dunning, 3 August 1922, p. 48433; Dunning to W. C. Kennedy, 3 August 1922, p. 48434.

[30] PMAA, Premier's Office Files [hereafter cited as Premier's Files], C. A. Dunning and H. Greenfield to J. Stewart, 6 August 1922; C. A. Dunning and H. Greenfield to F. W. Riddell, 6 August 1922; J. Stewart and F. W. Riddell to H. Greenfield, 7 August 1922; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, J. Stewart and F. W. Riddell to Dunning, 7 August 1922, p. 48231.

[31] PMAA, Premier's Files, C. A. Dunning and H. Greenfield to W. L. M. King, 6 August 1922.

> We feel now after spending over two weeks in the effort, that we have canvassed the field fully for suitable men and have to state that men having the necessary ability and experience are unwilling to assume the great responsibility involved.

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[32] *Ibid.*, H. Greenfield to W. C. Kennedy, 8 August 1922; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, H. Greenfield and A. P. McNab to Dunning, 11 August 1922, p. 48249; J. A. Cross to Dunning, 12 August 1922, pp. 48539-44.

[33] PMAA, Premier's Files, C. A. Dunning and H. Greenfield to W. C. Kennedy, 13 August 1922; J. McFarlane and J. R. Murray to C. A. Dunning and H. Greenfield, 14 August 1922.

[34] *Ibid.*, C. A. Dunning and H. Greenfield to W. C. Kennedy, 14 August 1922.

> One of our greatest difficulties lay in the fact that most of the men best qualified for these positions belong to the ordinary grain trade and there is no doubt that the great majority of the men in the grain trade are opposed to the wheat board idea.
>
> Those who believe the Board to be a necessity this year declined to take the positions because of the opposition of the grain trade in general. In this connection they repeatedly pointed out to us that the use of facilities controlled by the various branches of the trade was absolutely necessary, expecially in view of the short time available for organization.[35]

A few days later, the Winnipeg Grain Exchange issued a statement of its own expressing its continued opposition to any form of compulsory wheat marketing.[36]

The Wheat Board was dead, at least so far as the 1922 crop was concerned. There was nothing for the Dunning government to do now but attempt to ameliorate the worst effects of any further decline in grain prices. Immediately after the Premiers' announcement that they had failed to re-establish a Wheat Board, Dunning wired Ottawa suggesting that the federal government call a special conference with the banks to prevent the sharp drop in grain prices which would result if farmers were forced to rush their crop to market in order to meet their financial obligations. The suggestion was referred to Sir Frederick Williams-Taylor, head of the Canadian Bankers' Association. He assured Dunning that the farmers would get the same consideration as they had received in the past.[37] This was not what the Saskatchewan Premier had had in mind, and he wired the Prime Minister again to clarify his original suggestion: that the banks extend a portion of the amounts due them from all creditors, businessmen and farmers alike. If this were done, then the merchants and implement dealers would not have to press the farmer unduly, and he would be able to secure a higher price for his grain by selling it gradually.[38] Businessmen in Saskatchewan welcomed Dunning's suggestion. So too did at least one of the province's Progressive M.P.'s.[39] Williams-Taylor replied only that the banks would "... show their borrowers all proper leniency in the repayment of advances from the proceeds of this year's crop,"[40] and no conference such as Dunning had suggested was ever held.

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[35] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, press statement by C. A. Dunning and Herbert Greenfield, 14 August 1922, pp. 48261-62.

[36] *Guide*, 23 August 1922.

The Premier also decided to meet again with the various classes of creditors, as Martin had done the previous year. Representatives of several mortgage and credit firms, the Lumbermen's, Implement Dealers' and Retail Merchants' Associations, the

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[37] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. L. M. King, 16 August 1922, pp. 2211-13; W. L. M. King to Dunning, 18 August 1922, pp. 2215; F. Williams-Taylor to Dunning, 22 August 1922, pp. 2228-29.

[38] *Ibid.*, Dunning to W. L. M. King, 22 August 1922, pp. 2223-24.

[39] *Leader*, 19 August 1922; PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, R. M. Johnson to King, 25 August 1922, pp. 63620-22.

[40] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, F. Williams-Taylor to W. L. M. King, 30 August 1922, p. 2235.

S.A.R.M., S.G.G.A. and Saskatchewan Stock Growers' Association were invited to the meeting, which took place in Regina on 13 September.[41] One group of creditors was conspicuously absent. The banks had not been invited, Dunning explained in his opening remarks, because it was difficult to secure representatives with the necessary powers to speak authoritatively for these institutions. He believed, though, that his recent proposal for a federally-sponsored bankers' conference had served to make them more aware of economic conditions in Saskatchewan, and hoped that this would result in a more sympathetic attitude toward farmers who found themselves in financial difficulty.[42]

The Premier indulged in some plain speaking at the conference. With the fine crop then being harvested, one which was to exceed in size and quality even that of 1915,[43] there was a danger that creditors would attempt to force collection of the accumulated indebtedness of past years out of the proceeds of a single good crop. He frankly admitted that his government was under mounting pressure to declare a moratorium on account of the activities of sheriffs and bailiffs. There was no doubt as to the objections to a moratorium and the effect it would have on the province's credit, but conditions in Saskatchewan had brought the necessity for a moratorium closer than ever before. He did not want to have to resort to such a drastic measure, but warned that if prices at the country elevators dropped to $.70 a bushel, the crop would not be able to liquidate the farmers' debts. The government's decision as to a moratorium, then, would depend upon two factors: the continuance of the piling up of what he considered to be ridiculous and in most cases unnecessary costs under the present methods of collection, and the price of wheat. In the meantime, Dunning announced, the government proposed to extend its efforts to mediate in individual cases between a farmer and his creditors. A new agency, the Debt Adjustment Bureau, would be established within the Department of Agriculture and local representatives would be appointed across the province. The majority of the creditors present at the conference welcomed the Premier's announcement, and indicated that they were prepared to co-operate in securing fair and reasonable settlements with individual farmers.[44]

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[41] *Ibid.*, Dunning to J. Appleton, etc., 2 September 1922, pp. 2239-40.

[42] *Leader*, 14 September 1922.

[43] *Agriculture Report*, 1923, pp. 222, 227, 238.

They were as good as their word, and the Debt Adjustment Bureau was able to report the following spring that it had received their complete co-operation. A total of 5,000 cases had been dealt with since the inception of the Bureau, involving debts amounting to more than $10,000,000, and it was able to distribute the proceeds of crops to the extent of $2,500,000. In no case had it attempted to interfere with the collection of taxes by municipalities.[45] The Bureau's policy reflected the attitude of the Premier himself, who was strongly opposed to the idea that the municipality should wait for its taxes until the other creditors had been paid. Amounts owing to the municipality ought to be paid first, so that the various public institutions, such as schools, could be continued in operation.[46] Grain prices held up remarkably well, averaging $.85 at the country elevator, and this helped to boost the total estimated farm income for Saskatchewan from $173,461,060 in 1921 to $232,524,300 in 1922.[47] There still remained a wide disparity between the prices farmers received for their wheat and livestock, and their obligations to the banks, implement companies and other creditors, and this gave reason for continued discouragement and discontent as 1922 gave way to 1923.

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[44] *Leader,* 14 September 1922.

It was at this time that the Saskatchewan Premier advanced a new grain marketing scheme which became known as the "Dunning Plan." Speaking before a Liberal banquet in his honour in Saskatoon, he chided the prairie farm organizations and the Canadian Council of Agriculture for their apparent inability to produce any meaningful proposals for the long term marketing of the western crop, it being agreed by all responsible public men and farm leaders that compulsory marketing through a Wheat Board could be only an interim solution. The "Dunning Plan" was, in essence, a proposal for a voluntary pool to be created by amalgamating the export subsidiaries of the two existing farmer-owned grain companies.[48] On the face of it, the Premier's suggestion possessed considerable merit. It offered a permanent rather than a temporary solution, and the farmer's grain would be handled by an organization which he himself controlled. The plan involved a minimum of financial risk, resting as it did upon the combined financial resources of the two great farmers' grain companies. Unlike the Wheat Board, Dunning's proposed marketing scheme was not dependent on government support, nor would it be subject to government interference, and since it was voluntary rather than compulsory, it was likely to meet a minimum of antagonism from the Winnipeg Grain Exchange.[49]

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[45] *Agriculture Report,* 1923, pp. 315-17.

[46] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to A. E. Francis, 7 September 1922, p. 2428; Dunning to C. H. Palmer, 18 September 1923, pp. 17119-21.

[47] *Ibid.,* Dunning to F. P. Mount, 2 January 1923, pp. 2730-31; *Agriculture Report,* 1922, p. 304; 1923, p. 246.

In spite of its merits, and the reputation of its author, the "Dunning Plan" received a more favourable reception in the other western provinces than it did in Saskatchewan. T. A. Crerar and and C. Rice-Jones of the United Grain Growers at once voiced their approval of the scheme.[50] George Langley, President of the Saskatchewan "Co-op," criticized the proposal. He claimed that deliveries would be uncertain under such a voluntary pool and that a farmers' export company which could not hope, in his opinion, to handle even 25 per cent of the crop would be exposed to the concentrated competition of the regular grain trade. "A pool created and operated under such circumstances could not possibly have a chance of permanent endurance," he declared. "It would be doomed to failure before it was commenced."[51] M. N. Campbell, one of the Progressive M.P.'s from Saskatchewan, criticized Dunning for even making the suggestion. As an experienced and capable grain man, and head of the sole remaining Liberal government on the prairies, the Saskatchewan Premier could do more than any other man in western Canada to secure the re-establishment of the Wheat Board. There was a danger that the "Dunning Plan," advocated when it was, would simply postpone action in providing immediate relief to farmers through the Wheat Board.[52]

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[48] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to G. F. Chipman, 2 December 1922, p. 48465; same to same, 12 December 1922, pp. 48570-71; *Leader,* 16 December 1922.

[49] Patton, pp. 205-206.

Dunning's suggestion turned out to be nothing more than that. The majority of western farmers were still wedded to the Wheat Board as the remedy for the low grain prices that plagued prairie agriculture. His effort to "... point public opinion in a practical, sound direction"[53] was but a brief interlude between attempts to re-establish the Wheat Board. The prospects for success appeared brighter with the indication early in 1923 that Manitoba would join the scheme. Premier Bracken intimated as much to the United Farmers of Manitoba convention in January. In his address, and in subsequent correspondence with his Alberta and Saskatchewan counterparts, Bracken made it clear that Manitoba's legislation would be for just one year and would be brought down only if the governments and farmers' organizations in the three provinces declared their intention to develop a co-operative, non-profit, non-compulsory marketing system for the 1924 crop season.[54]

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[50] *Leader*, 18 December 1922.

[51] *Guide*, 27 December 1922.

[52] *Ibid.*, 7 February 1923.

For their part, Premiers Dunning and Greenfield told the farmers' conventions in their respective provinces that they were prepared to support a Wheat Board as a temporary measure, but that a permanent solution must be found in some voluntary co-operative plan. The Saskatchewan Premier went farther, and informed the Grain Growers that no decision would be made regarding action by the government until he had consulted with the Legislature. "The Government is responsible to the people of Saskatchewan through their elected representatives in the Legislature," he declared, "and the Government is not responsible to any other organized body whatsoever."[55] The words must have sounded strange coming from a man whose own career had been a shining example of the close relationship that had existed over the years between the Liberal government at Regina and the S.G.G.A.

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[53] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to S. Archer, 3 January 1923, pp. 44526-27.

[54] *Guide*, 17 January 1923; PMAA, Premier's Files, J. Bracken to H. Greenfield, 23 January 1923; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, J. Bracken to Dunning, 23 January 1923, p. 48273.

Dunning made no further public pronouncements regarding his government's attitude toward the Wheat Board until the Legislature met early in February. Even the Speech from the Throne contained no reference to the matter.[56] The Premier outlined to the House the terms under which Manitoba had agreed to participate, and presented a resolution complying with these conditions as far as possible. J. A. Maharg, who was now acting as Leader of the Opposition, reaffirmed the support of the Independents for the Wheat Board, and the resolution received the unanimous approval of the Legislature on 23 February.[57] Dunning had his mandate to co-operate with the other western Premiers in attempting to secure a Wheat Board for 1923. In April Saskatchewan and Alberta were left to go it alone. The Wheat Board bill which Bracken had introduced as a non-party measure was narrowly defeated in the Manitoba Legislature.[58] Dunning quite readily admitted that this would make it more difficult for the two remaining provinces to form a Wheat Board,[59] though he and Greenfield spent another two months trying before giving up.

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[55] *Guide*, 24 January 1923; AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1923, pp. 10-11.

[56] *Journals*, 1923, pp. 7-8.

[57] *Leader*, 21-24 February 1923, 27 February 1923.

[58] *Ibid.*, 28 April 1923.

The two Premiers met in Regina early in May to discuss their next move in the light of Manitoba's refusal to co-operate, but declined of course to make any public statement.[60] During the next few weeks they apparently attempted to negotiate with private individuals, as they had done the year before, with as little success.[61] The negotiations seemed to take a new course in the second week of June, when the two Premiers closeted themselves with the executives of the two farmers' grain companies in Regina.[62] The meeting had been arranged by Dunning and Greenfield in a final attempt to put a Wheat Board into operation for the 1923 season.[63] They requested the companies to appoint representatives to assist in securing the necessary expert personnel, and to act as members of a Wheat Board when formed. The United Grain Growers agreed to co-operate, and nominated H. W. Wood, and two directors of that farmers' elevator company, J. F. Reid and J. J. McClellan. T. A. Crerar, its president, assured the Premiers that any practical experts on his staff would be free to accept positions as officers of the Wheat Board, provided they were approached as private individuals. The Saskatchewan "Co-op," on the other hand, was only prepared to appoint representatives if Dunning and Greenfield would also agree to serve as members of the Board. The two Premiers did not feel they could give such a definite undertaking, and the meeting adjourned without anything having been resolved.[64]

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[59] *Ibid.*

[60] *Ibid.*, 5 May 1923.

[61] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to H. Greenfield, 11 May 1923, p. 48328; memorandum of telephone conversation with Greenfield, 30 May 1923, p. 48342; memorandum of conversation with Greenfield, 4 June 1923, p. 48343.

[62] *Leader*, 12 June 1923; *McPhail Diary*, p. 41.

[63] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, transcript of telephone conversation with T. A. Crerar, 5 June 1923, pp. 48344-49; transcript of telephone conversation with George Langley, 5 June 1923, p. 48352.

The following day, 13 June, the Saskatchewan "Co-op" executive agreed to nominate three of their number, J. A. Maharg, J. B. Musselman and H. C. Fleming. Along with F. W. Riddell, the Company's general manager, they were to assist the Premiers in organizing a Wheat Board, but again their co-operation was made conditional upon the Premiers themselves agreeing to serve on it.[65] A second meeting between the Premiers and the representatives appointed by the two farmers' companies was held in Winnipeg, beginning on 16 June 1923. The Premiers again approached James Stewart to head the Wheat Board but, as in 1922, he refused. When other prominent grain men also declined to take the chairmanship, an earlier suggestion by the Saskatchewan "Co-op" that its export subsidiary be approached to act as selling agent for the Wheat Board was revived and given serious study. No agreement could be reached and the proposal was eventually dropped. Finally, on 21 June, all present agreed that nothing further could be done. The two Premiers issued a press statement the following day announcing that they had again been unable "... to secure a Board combining all necessary elements of experience, ability and public confidence."[66]

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[64] *Ibid.*, "Minutes of Conference re Wheat Board, Regina, June 12th 1923," pp. 48368-71.

[65] *Ibid.*, memorandum of telephone conversations with W. C. Mills, Secretary of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and Premier Greenfield, 14 June 1923, pp. 48375-76.

In two successive years Premier Dunning and his Alberta counterpart had taken an active part in efforts to secure a Wheat Board, and in two successive years these efforts had failed. The reaction of the *Grain Growers' Guide* could be considered typical of farm opinion on the prairies:

> It will be a very difficult matter to apportion the blame for the downfall of the wheat board negotiations. Premier Greenfield and Premier Dunning have exhausted every effort in a sincere desire to carry out the wishes of the farmers of their provinces in the creation of a wheat board for the marketing of this year's crop. No blame can be laid at their door. They have done all that any person could have done.

Looking to the future, the *Guide* observed:

> In view of the efforts of the past two years to secure a wheat board and the complete failure that has been the result of these efforts, it may reasonably be assumed now

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[66] *Ibid.*, "Record of conference between Premiers Greenfield and Dunning and Messrs. Maharg, Musselman, Fleming, Riddell, H. W. Wood, J. F. Reid and MacLellan [*sic*] ...." 25 June 1923, pp. 48389-401; press statement by Herbert Greenfield and C. A. Dunning, 22 June 1923, pp. 48409-10.

> that the wheat board idea is dead ... Farmers in the prairie provinces will be wise now to turn their efforts toward the establishment of a voluntary pooling system under their own control.[67]

With all hope of securing a Wheat Board apparently gone, the farmers did indeed turn to the organization of a voluntary pool to handle western grain. The work was undertaken by the farmers' organizations acting independently within each province. Aaron Sapiro, an American lawyer and pooling expert who had set up produce pools in the Middle West and California, was brought to western Canada by the combined efforts of the various farm organizations and undertook a speaking tour which fired the imagination of thousands of farmers. The short space of time remaining between the announced failure of Premiers Dunning and Greenfield to secure a Wheat Board and the onset of the harvest season hampered the activities of the pool organizers. Nevertheless by October nearly half of Alberta's wheat acreage was signed up to five year pool contracts, and the Alberta Co-operative Wheat Producers' Limited began to handle members' grain.[68]

In Saskatchewan a much larger acreage was involved, and there were other complications which delayed the start of the organization campaign. Chief among these was the rivalry between the S.G.G.A. and the more radical Farmers' Union of Canada, which had been organized at Ituna in December 1921. From the outset, relations between the two farmers' organizations had been far from cordial. This should not have been surprising, for the Farmers' Union was everything the S.G.G.A. was not. The F.U.C. was a national organization, though most of its "lodges," as its local branches were called, were to be found in Saskatchewan. It modelled itself on the One Big Union, adopting whole sections of the latter's constitution, including much of its Marxist preamble, and eschewed active participation in politics in favour of economic action. Where the S.G.G.A. conducted its affairs in an open and straightforward fashion, the activities of the Farmers' Union had an almost conspiratorial air about them, with special passwords, hand grips and other rituals reminiscent of some secret society. Its conventions were held behind closed doors, and no one but an "actual dirt farmer" could join its ranks. Within two years the membership of the F.U.C. numbered 10,000. To some extent it had grown at the expense of the S.G.G.A., but it was also strong in areas of the province where the older farmers' organization had never had a large following. It was also more successful in attracting to its ranks those farmers whose mother tongue was not English, particularly Ukrainians.[69] The Farmers' Union was quick to endorse the pooling idea. Early in July 1922, at its second annual convention in Saskatoon, it approved a resolution in favour of the immediate inauguration of a wheat pool based on five-year contracts, invited the co-operation of the provincial government and the S.G.G.A., and took the lead in inviting Aaron Sapiro to Saskatchewan.[70]

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[67] *Guide*, 27 June 1923.

[68] Patton, pp. 213-19; L. D. Nesbitt, *Tides in the West: A Wheat Pool History* (Saskatoon: Modern Press, 1962), pp. 34-69. Sapiro was no stranger to western farmers, at least those who read the *Grain Growers' Guide*, for that newspaper had published several articles between 1920 and 1923 describing his success in organizing pools in the United States and British Columbia. (*Guide*, 28 April 1920, 5 May 1920, 25 October 1922, 21 March 1923.)

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[69] D. S. Spafford, "The Origin of the Farmers' Union of Canada," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XVIII No. 3 (Autumn, 1965) pp. 89-98.

The S.G.G.A. was divided. The pool idea found its strongest support among the increasingly vocal element of the Association which was opposed to the concentration of power in the hands of the "interlocking directorate." The three recognized leaders of this insurgent group, George F. Edwards, vice-president of the Grain Growers, Mrs. Violet McNaughton, the long-time president of the W.G.G.A. who had headed the poll in the elections for district directors at the 1922 S.G.G.A. convention in Regina,[71] and A. J. McPhail, who had succeeded J. B. Musselman as secretary when the latter resigned to become managing director of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company in August 1922,[72] were all to play a prominent role in the pool campaign in Saskatchewan. J. A. Maharg and the other "Co-op" men on the S.G.G.A. executive were lukewarm, if not openly hostile, to the pool scheme. Early in May 1923, even before it had become apparent that the efforts to establish a Wheat Board would again fail, A. J. McPhail had written a lengthy letter to Violet McNaughton in which he outlined his views:

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[70] *Saskatoon Star*, 3 July 1923; *Leader*, 17 July 1923.

[71] *McPhail Diary*, pp. 23-24.

[72] AS, J. B. Musselman Papers, Musselman to all directors, 22 August 1922; *McPhail Diary*, p. 27.

> I am very strongly of the opinion myself, that the solution of our marketing difficulties is the biggest immediate problem that we have, and I am also very strongly of the opinion that the solution of that problem runs along the lines of the farmers organizing a co-operative association, owned and controlled by themselves, especially when it seems almost beyond the region [*sic*] of possibility that we can get a national marketing scheme under way. I think there is quite a feeling in many quarters that the farmers' organizations have been playing politics with this question, and that they have been dilly-dallying in a manner that will never get the farmers anywhere in the solution of this question ...
>
> I believe that if our Association ... were to come out flat-footed in the near future -- and it should be in the near future, if it is to be done at all -- for the organization of a farmers" [*sic*] owned and controlled co-operative agency for the marketing of their wheat, it would be the greatest boost that our Association could have. If we do not do it in the near future, the initiative is going to come from other sources -- of this, I have very little doubt -- and as a result our own organization can be accused of having been asleep at the switch.[73]

McPhail's prediction proved to be correct. When the Farmers' Union took the lead in proposing the formation of a five-year contract pool, Maharg and Musselman hurriedly conceived an alternate pooling scheme that would operate without contracts. The new secretary had already had "a couple of rather sharp tiffs" with Maharg, and he had another over this proposal. McPhail regarded it as unworkable and fully believed that it had been advanced with the "... deliberate intention of killing the co-operative pooling idea" because Maharg and the others viewed a pool as an unwelcome competitor to the farmer-owned grain company with which they were so closely associated.[74] When the full executive of the S.G.G.A. met in Regina in mid-July they decided to proceed at once with the organization of a provincial wheat pool which would operate without contracts in 1923, and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company agreed to advance $10,000 to assist in setting up such a pool.[75]

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[73] AS, Violet McNaughton Papers, A. J. McPhail to McNaughton, 2 May 1923.

As for the government, it approached the new marketing scheme cautiously at first. On 10 July Dunning felt obliged to deny rumours that his government was inviting Aaron Sapiro to come to Saskatchewan and organize a pool, although he did announce that such a scheme would receive the moral support of his government.[76] Dunning did act as chairman of the Sapiro meetings in Saskatoon and Regina, held early in August. He appealed to the two rival farm organizations to come together on the pooling scheme, arguing that the alternative was duplication and strife, and assured his audiences that any sound plan for the marketing of Saskatchewan's products would have the full support of his government. Dunning presented a resolution to the Regina meeting proposing the creation of a joint wheat pool organization consisting of representatives from farm and other interested groups, including the government.

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[74] *Ibid.*, A. J. McPhail to McNaughton, 7 July 1923.

[75] *Leader*, 19 July 1923; *McPhail Diary*, p. 47.

[76] *Leader*, 10 July 1923.

The resolution was adopted,[77] and the two pool organizations in Saskatchewan were persuaded to join in the organization of a single wheat pool in the province.

Aaron Sapiro was the key figure in bringing the two together, and he did it by appealing to J. A. Maharg's pride. Sapiro had proposed to A. J. McPhail that the S.G.G.A. president be placed nominally at the head of a large wheat pool committee, with the real work to be entrusted to a smaller executive committee chaired by someone else. McPhail saw at once that Maharg would object to this, for it had long been the custom in the S.G.G.A. that the nominal head of the organization be also the head of the executive committee. Sapiro then made the suggestion that Maharg be given all the honour and prestige possible, and that the smaller committee be called the "Campaign Committee." This McPhail regarded as "... nothing short of an inspiration," and when Sapiro approached Maharg next day and offered him the presiding position within a new combined wheat pool organization, the once-reluctant Maharg was "... nothing short of enthusiastic over the whole thing, and apparently is going to do everything that he can to get behind and put the thing over."[78] At one stroke Sapiro had managed to unite the two farmers' organizations in a common effort. The S.G.G.A. agreed to drop its non-contract pool and a representative provincial committee was formed to begin the organization drive.[79] Significantly, Sapiro picked A. J. McPhail to head the "Campaign Committee." That choice at last enabled the insurgents within the S.G.G.A. to gain the upper hand in their long struggle with the "Co-op" men for control of that farmers' organization.[80]

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[77] *Ibid.*, 8 August 1923, 10 August 1923.

[78] AS, Violet McNaughton Papers, A. J. McPhail to McNaughton, 9 August 1923; *McPhail Diary*, pp. 48-49.

Not only did Aaron Sapiro act as a unifying influence in Saskatchewan, but his speeches in Saskatoon, Regina and Moose Jaw also spurred farmers to a frenzy of activity without parallel in the history of the province. Frank Underhill, who in 1923 was teaching history at the University of Saskatchewan, was one of those who attended Sapiro's first meeting. Forty-seven years later the memory of that evening was still fresh:

> I can still recall vividly the evangelistic fervour of the great mass meeting in Third Avenue Methodist Church in Saskatoon at which Aaron Sapiro launched the Wheat Pool movement in that Province. His speech was the most magnificent to which I have ever listened. And as he led up to his climax about co-operation as a way of life and not merely a way of selling wheat or other commodities, he roused his audience as I fancy [William Jennings] Bryan must have roused the populist democracy of the American Mid-West by his famous Cross of Gold speech in 1896.[81]

The objective set for the Pool organizers in Saskatchewan was to sign 50 per cent of the wheat acreage to five-year contracts,[82] and they went about the task with a determination that brooked no opposition.

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[79] *Guide,* 15 August 1923; *McPhail Diary,* p. 49.

[80] *McPhail Diary,* p. 48; Courville, pp. 138-39.

[81] F. H. Underhill, "What, then is the Manitoban, this New Man? or This Almost Chosen People," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers,* 1970, p. 41.

[82] S. W. Yates, *The Saskatchewan Wheat Pool: Its Origin,*

Premier Dunning did not play the active part in this campaign that he had in connection with the attempts to re-establish the Wheat Board, but he did issue a public statement at the end of August urging those farmers who believed in the pooling scheme to sign up so that it could be given a fair trial.[83] He cautioned Saskatchewan farmers to read the contract carefully before signing it, and declared that it would do no good to get preachers in their pulpits to use emotional methods to get the necessary signatures.[84]

Dunning's admonition to read the contract carefully was taken up by the Saskatoon and Regina papers. All were now sympathetic to the government, W. F. Herman having sold the *Regina Daily Post* and the Saskatoon *Daily Star* to George M. Bell and the Leader Publishing Company in February 1923.[85] Not only did the four dailies in the *Leader* group steadfastly oppose the scheme of five-

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Organization and Progress, 1924-1935 (Saskatoon: United Farmers of Canada, n.d.), pp. 81-85.

[83] *Leader*, 31 August 1923.

[84] *Ibid.*, 20 August 1923, 22 August 1923. Dunning was referring to a request by the Pool organizers that the clergy throughout the province discuss the Wheat Pool on 26 August, the last Sunday before the deadline. (*Ibid.*, 14 August 1923).

[85] The Leader Publishing Company had already acquired control of the Saskatoon *Phoenix* in 1918. For a more detailed discussion of this process of newspaper consolidation in Saskatchewan which culminated in the sale of the Herman newspapers see Brennan, "Press and Party," pp. 83-84.

year contracts, but these newspapers were also exceptionally critical of Aaron Sapiro, so much so that the California lawyer eventually sued the *Leader* for libel.[86] The prospect of monopoly control of Saskatchewan's daily newspapers had been of such concern to the S.G.G.A. that it had already made arrangements to begin publication of an official paper of its own. The *Progressive,* as it was called, was rushed into print to do battle with the enemies of the Pool.[87] The first issues of the *Progressives,* its editor, Harris Turner, announced on 27 August 1923, would be "... emergency issues, published largely for the purpose of giving the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool as much support as can be rendered."[88] From the outset, the *Progressive* proved to be a vigorous critic of the "Concentrated Press." The Pool organizers were warned not to underestimate the power of the Bell chain, whose persistent and unwarranted opposition it declared to be the greatest menace to the formation of a wheat pool. The *Progressive* promised to give precedence to the Pool campaign over all other matters in its columns, and to do all it could to put the Pool's case before the farmers of Saskatchewan.[89]

The summer and fall months were much taken up with talk of the Wheat Pool, but politics were not neglected either. In fact for the Liberals and for their opponents too, 1923 was a most critical year. Political necessity had dictated that the new Premier disavow any connection with his federal Liberal counterparts upon assuming office in April 1922, but as a good party man he could be expected to heal the breach as soon as circumstances would permit. From all outward appearances the enthusiasm of S.G.G.A. locals for provincial political action was steadily diminishing, a reflection perhaps of the strength of Dunning's own personal popularity among Saskatchewan farmers.[90] With his government in no immediate danger, it must have appeared to the Premier an opportune time to restore the link with the federal Liberals.

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[86] Yates, pp. 88-101.

[87] Brennan, "Press and Party," p. 84.

[88] *Progressive,* 27 August 1923.

[89] *Ibid.*, 5 September 1923, 21 February 1924.

An opportunity presented itself early in 1923, in the form of a federal by-election in Moose Jaw. The sitting member, R. M. Johnson, had been unseated on account of irregularities in the 1921 federal election, and a by-election had been called for 10 April 1923. An appeal was made to Dunning to actively assist in the campaign in the common cause of Liberalism.[91] The Saskatchewan Premier remained aloof. He had been bothered by the 'flu during the session of the Legislature just concluded, and intended to go away for a short rest. In fact, he had been advised to stay out of the province until the campaign was over. The Progressives had shrewdly nominated E. N. Hopkins, a long-time Conservative, in the hopes of wooing Conservative voters in Moose Jaw. There was some danger that the Premier might make a "characteristic fighting speech" which would play into the hands of the Progressives by alienating Conservative voters. "Practically everybody else" would be going to Moose Jaw, though, under the watchful eye of J. G. Gardiner, head of the provincial Liberal machine.[92]

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[90] *Guide,* 9 August 1922; PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 1 February 1923.

[91] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Dunning, 19 March 1923, pp. 47131-33.

The co-operation of the federal and provincial Liberals was not enough. In a straight two-way fight with the Liberal, W. E. Knowles, the Progressive candidate won easily.[93] The vigorous campaign waged by the provincial Liberals did not go unnoticed. The *Grain Growers' Guide* informed its readers that five members of Dunning's cabinet and seven Liberal M.L.A.'s had toured the riding on behalf of Knowles. At one meeting during the campaign, according to the *Guide*, Gardiner had announced that the cabinet had decided

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[92] *Ibid.*, Dunning to W. R. Motherwell, 24 March 1923, pp. 47134-35.

[93] *Directory of Federal Elections*, p. 38. The local Conservatives had decided not to put a candidate in the field, but the party did not remain inactive during the campaign. "The question of the position our party friends should take has been the subject of much discussion here," a Conservative Senator from Saskatchewan reported, "and my own opinion and the general opinion, seems to be that as the Farmers Party will pass away and as we will have to fight the Grits for all time to come, it is best for us to side in with the Farmers or take any other steps necessary in order to prejudice or handicap the [Liberal] party." (PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, H. W. Laird to J. E. Chisholm, 5 March 1923, pp. 76949-50.) Conservative voters in Moose Jaw were therefore urged to support Hopkins. (*Ibid.*, Meighen to C. Parker, 2 April 1923, pp. 67394-95.)

"... it was time for a showdown with the farmers' political movement, and that the Moose Jaw by-election afforded the opportunity."[94] This produced a quick reply from the Minister of Highways that he had made no such statement.[95] Whether he had or not, the active participation of members of the provincial government in a federal by-election campaign indicated that Dunning and Gardiner, now less concerned about the threat from the S.G.G.A., were anxious to reunite the two wings of the party.

Open identification with Mackenzie King and the Ottawa Liberals was not without its perils, as the Saskatchewan Premier discovered when the federal budget was brought down in May. W. S. Fielding announced no real changes in the tariff at a time when the Progressives were clamouring for tariff reductions, and actually intimated that, in the interests of a stable tariff, the farmers could expect little relief in the future.[96] Dunning and Gardiner had both advised Mackenzie King of the need for tariff reductions in line with the platform drawn up by the Liberals at their 1919 convention, and still more especially in light of the results in

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[94] *Guide*, 18 April 1923.

[95] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, J. G. Gardiner to the editor, *Grain Growers' Guide*, 25 April 1923; *Guide*, 9 May 1923. The *Guide* based its claim on the word of two Progressive M.P.'s, R. A. Hoey and A. J. Lewis, who had been present when Gardiner allegedly made this announcement. (*Guide*, 9 May 1923, 30 May 1923.)

[96] R. M. Dawson, p. 441.

Moose Jaw.[97] Obviously, their suggestions had not been acted upon. Dunning was incensed at Fielding's remarks and the general attitude of the federal party. The western Liberals had been "thrown completely to the wolves by Mr. Fielding with the concurrence of his colleagues." With such an attitude prevailing in Ottawa it would be impossible to erect a federal Liberal organization in Saskatchewan. Regarding his own position, Dunning was especially frank:

> It is particularly hard for us to get a crack like this after squaring away a political situation and getting out of the neutral attitude in which we were involved for so long. On purely political grounds the Government would have been much stronger to-day if we had remained in the neutral position and adopted a continuously critical attitude toward Ottawa policies. However, we are just as good Liberals as ever and will have to take our medicine, but you can expect that we will in future exercise much more freely than in the past the privilege which Liberals have, of freely criticising the policies of our friends.[98]

The return of the Regina government to active support of the federal Liberals was bound to have repercussions in the provincial political arena. The reaction came, not from the Grain

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[97] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 24 April 1923, p. 72524; J. G. Gardiner to King, 27 April 1923, p. 73083.

[98] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. R. Motherwell, 28 May 1923, pp. 47161-62. Dunning was equally frank when he wrote to Mackenzie King in July: "I am not one of those who believe that this country can get to a free trade basis but I do believe that in order to remain a factor in Canada, and particularly in Western Canada with its growing electoral power, the Liberal party must demonstrate that it is sincerely a low tariff party and give evidence of that by performance when in power." (PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 27 July 1923, p. 72534.)

Growers, who had not even formally discussed the question of provincial political action at their 1923 convention,[99] but from the Independents who had been elected to the Legislature in 1921. Disappointed in their hope of support from the S.G.G.A., these Independents took steps in the fall of 1923 to create a new political organization of their own. It was launched at a convention in Milestone, where the death of the sitting member, a Liberal, had forced the government to hold a by-election. The guest speaker at this convention was Harris Turner, the Independent member for Saskatoon and editor of the *Progressive*. Not surprisingly, Turner's speech was, according to one newspaper report, "a general arraignment of the party system of government." While admitting that Premier Dunning was an excellent man, Turner observed that every time Dunning rose to speak in the Legislature, one could "visualize behind him the cogs, wheels, pistons and pinions of a menacing machine." The convention passed a resolution which viewed "with grave alarm" the close association of the Regina and Ottawa governments and the active participation of Dunning's colleagues in the Moose Jaw by-election, and then proceeded to organize a Saskatchewan Provincial Progressive Association to preserve the results already achieved by the federal Progressives.[100] A local farmer, J. V. Patterson, was chosen to contest the by-election, and steps were taken to begin organizing the whole province.[101]

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[99] J. A. Maharg made no mention of the question in his presidential address on the opening day, though it did come up briefly during the dying hours of the convention. A delegate from the Marquis local moved a resolution rescinding the action that had been taken in 1922 in entering the provincial field as an association, but it was defeated without discussion. (AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1923, pp. 15-20, 82.)

Chastened by his abortive attempt to link the separated wings of the Liberal party, Dunning had already declared at the Liberal nominating convention the week before that it was a bad thing for a provincial government or a provincial party to be "bound hand and foot" to any federal party organization. He did not propose that his government become a "donkey engine" of the federal Liberals.[102] The cabinet was out in full force attacking the Progressives for using the federal organization and federal speakers in a provincial campaign. Provincial issues were largely ignored, though Dunning did accuse his opponents of attempting to turn the Wheat Pool organizers into political campaigners, and of conducting a "whispering campaign" accusing him of a lack of support for the Pool.[103] The result was a victory for the government, by the largest majority ever recorded in the riding.[104] Whatever its shortcomings in terms of consistency, the Dunning government certainly seemed in a stronger position at year's end. With the triumph in Milestone, Dunning had managed to run his string of by-election victories to seven. It was an impressive performance, one which did not bode well for those who hoped to dislodge the Liberals from office. The foray into Moose Jaw had had no visible effect on the government's popularity, and some were already freely predicting that Dunning could quite safely appeal to the people whenever he chose.[105]

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[100] *Leader,* 13 October 1923.

[101] *Progressive,* 18 October 1923.

[102] *Leader,* 6 October 1923.

[103] *Ibid.,* 19 October 1923.

[104] *Legislative Directory,* pp. 118-19; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to J. W. Hamilton, 1 November 1923, p. 44760.

The Pool organizers, meanwhile, had failed to reach their objective in Saskatchewan before the 1923 crop began to move to market. The work was carried on over the winter, assisted by grants from the two farmers' grain companies and from the provincial government. By the middle of June 1924 more than half the crop acreage in the province was signed up to the five year contracts.[106] The completion of the sign-up campaign and the formal organization of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Wheat Producers Limited on 23 July[107] marked the end of nearly a year of intense activity for Saskatchewan farmers. The Wheat Pool had been swept in on a wave of hope, hope that the farmer would at last find himself on an equal footing with the financier, the businessman and the manufacturer. No longer would he look on helplessly while his prices were set in a capricious market; now he too would be able, through the Central Selling Agency created jointly by the three prairie pools, to set his own prices.[108]

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[105] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 13 February 1924.

[106] Patton, pp. 219-20; Yates, pp. 101-107; *McPhail Diary*, pp. 50-56.

[107] *McPhail Diary*, pp. 67-68.

These expectations were not to be realized for some time. The postwar depression still hung heavy over the province, its impact visibly manifest in farms abandoned or lost through foreclosure. In some districts, farmers took matters into their own hands, and there were reports of sheriff's sales of farm property for debt going without buyers because of boycotts organized by members of the Farmers' Union.[109] Although Saskatchewan farmers had harvested the largest wheat crop in the history of the province in 1923, a total of 271,622,000 bushels, estimated farm income declined by more than $60,000,000 as compared to the previous year. The greater portion of this decline was the result of a drop in the average price received by Saskatchewan farmers for their wheat, from $.85 per bushel in 1922 to only $.65 in 1923.[110] Total estimated farm income declined a further $22,000,000 in 1924, with better grain prices, the highest in four years, being offset by a severe drought in much of central and northern Saskatchewan, and reduced yields throughout the province.[111]

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[108] D. S. Spafford, "The 'Left Wing,' 1921-1931," *Politics in Saskatchewan*, pp. 46-47.

[109] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

[110] *Agriculture Report*, 1924, pp. 9, 255-58, 275-78.

In the face of all this, the government remained optimistic. On the basis of information received from municipalities respecting the payment of taxes, and from financial and other concerns to whom the farmers owed money, it believed that conditions in Saskatchewan were slowly improving.[112] Sympathetic as it was to the plight of the province's most important industry, the Dunning government continued to reject all demands for a quick method of easing the farmer's indebtedness -- a moratorium -- in favour of quiet investigation and negotiation in individual cases through the Debt Adjustment Bureau. No creditors' conference was called by the government in 1923, for the Premier had become far less sanguine about the results that could be achieved through such meetings. At the two previous conferences the implement companies and credit and mortgage firms had been represented by paid employees -- provincial managers or managers of city branches -- and they had not been able to speak definitely for their companies. These meetings had been productive of some good, but they had not really got at the root of the problem.[113]

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[111] *Ibid.*, 1925, pp. 9, 231-35, 256-58; *Budget Speech*, 9 January 1925, pp. 5-9.

[112] *Budget Speech*, 13 March 1924, pp. 6-9.

[113] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to A. Noble, 11 April 1924, pp. 40686-87; Dunning to S. Ellis, 11 April 1924, pp. 40692-93.

It was the S.G.G.A. which took the lead early in 1924 in proposing another conference to discuss ways and means of improving the prosperity of the Saskatchewan farmer.[114] Dunning agreed to attend, and during the conference secured a pledge from the representatives of the various creditors to create a central provincial collection agency that would co-operate with the Debt Adjustment Bureau in reducing the costs of collection. The delegates also urged the government to call another conference as soon as possible to devise ways of broadening the scope and increasing the efficiency of the Bureau.[115] Dunning complied with this request, and the conference took place later in the year. The chief topic of discussion at this meeting was a proposal from the Farmers' Union and the S.G.G.A. to replace the existing debt adjustment facilities with a system of arbitration boards located in each judicial district and a central appeal board in Regina. Each local board would consist of one government representative, one farmer representative and one representative of the creditors. The boards would have authority to adjudicate on all cases coming before them. In cases where the farmer was not shown to be dishonest or incompetent they would have the power to order the creditors to amortize the farmer's debts over a period of thirty-four years.[116]

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[114] *Ibid.*, G. F. Edwards to Dunning, 21 February 1924, pp. 40652-54.

[115] *Leader*, 15 May 1924; *Guide*, 21 May 1924.

It was really the idea of the Farmers' Union, which had been bombarding the Premier with proposals for local arbitration boards since the beginning of the year. Dunning believed the scheme to be unworkable. Creditors would not trust each other to a sufficient extent to permit them to allow one of their number to act for all, and to be willing to agree in advance to accept any decision reached by such a local committee. Moreover, while the debtor point of view would always be well represented under such an arrangement, it would be simply impossible for the creditors to arrange for representation on any considerable number of these boards operating at the same time.[117] He bluntly informed the conference that compulsory debt funding would not improve the condition of heavily indebted farmers and would make the condition of all other farmers in the province worse than ever. He agreed that the situation was a difficult one, but believed that the Debt Adjustment Bureau was the best available instrument for dealing with the problem. The government had already taken steps to improve that Bureau's facilities and extend the scope of its operations, and the Premier took pains to outline these changes in detail. It had advised sheriffs not to make seizures in cases where the condition of the debtor made it useless to do so unless specifically instructed by a creditor, and then only if the creditor guaranteed the costs. The government also intended to place a Bureau representative in the sheriff's office in each judicial district who would be available for consultation by any farmer in difficulties. In every case coming before it where such action was warranted by the character of the debtor and was necessary to keep him on the land, the Bureau had been instructed to attempt to persuade creditors that the farmer's debts be funded and the payments extended over as many years as appeared to be in the best interests of both parties.[118]

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[116] *Leader*, 11 September 1924; *Western Producer*, 18 September 1924.

[117] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to F. J. R. Higgins, 16 April 1924, pp. 2900-902; Dunning to F. H. Dunstan, 25 April 1924, pp. 2910-11.

The general consensus among the various implement, lumber, mortgage and other companies present at the conference seemed to be that conditions in the province were improving. As the representative of the Western Retail Lumber Dealers' Association put it:

> Our good customers are each year gradually reducing their liabilities ... Last year our current business was over 90 per cent paid at the end of the year. The good farmers have been constantly liquidating their debts. Saskatchewan is rapidly getting on its feet and coming back.

This impression of a slow but steady recovery was borne out by figures presented to the gathering by the head of the Debt Adjustment Bureau. He reported that the Bureau had handled a total of 5,000 cases in 1922, but that the number had dropped by nearly half in 1923 and 1924, to 2,765 and 2,855 respectively.[119]

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[118] *Leader*, 11 September 1924; *Western Producer*, 18 September 1924.

These were hopeful signs. From the government's point of view there were also hopeful signs during the year that it was continuing to gain ground in the province. In January 1924 the S.G.G.A. decided to leave politics altogether. The debate was short, and the majority large, on a resolution rescinding the decision taken at the 1922 convention to enter the provincial field. The S.G.G.A. was determined to follow a strictly neutral course in provincial politics. An attempt by way of a second resolution to support the Saskatchewan Provincial Progressive Association was tabled. There were two compelling reasons for the Grain Growers' decision to vacate the field. One was the continued slump in membership, which was widely attributed to the Association's involvement in politics.[120]

The other was related to the internal struggle between the entrenched leadership of the S.G.G.A. and the insurgents who wished to displace them. J. A. Maharg and J. B. Musselman had led the S.G.G.A. into provincial politics in 1922 in order to preserve their commanding position within the farmers' organization. Musselman had abandoned the secretaryship before the end of the year for a safer haven in the Saskatchean Co-operative Elevator

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[119] *Leader*, 11 September 1924.

[120] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1924, pp. 31-37, 142-45, 148-54.

Company,[121] and the insurgents, who increasingly dominated the executive after his departure, proved to have little enthusiasm for politics.[122] They were loath to support provincial political action behind the "Co-op" men who were using the advancement of political action and opposition to the Wheat Pool to further their own interests. Instead Edwards, McPhail and McNaughton turned their energies to an all-out effort to dislodge the entrenched leadership of the S.G.G.A. by placing their influence firmly behind the organization of the Pool, even though this meant developing a close working relationship with the chief foe of the Grain Growers' political movement, C. A. Dunning.[123] The final triumph of the insurgents came at the same convention at which the Grain Growers decided to leave provincial politics: J. A. Maharg was defeated in his fourteenth bid for the presidency of the S.G.G.A. by George Edwards.[124] The "Ginger Group," as the insurgents had come to be called, were now firmly in control of the S.G.G.A., and the Dunning government no longer had anything to fear from that quarter.

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[121] Musselman apparently realized that he had incurred the enmity of a large section of the rank and file membership of the S.G.G.A., and took the first opportunity to secure more congenial employment. (QUA, G. F. Chipman Papers, Chipman to T. A. Crerar, 31 March 1922; PAC, J. S. Woodsworth Papers, E. A. Partridge to Woodsworth, 31 August 1922.)

[122] AS, Violet McNaughton Papers, A. J. McPhail to McNaughton, 24 June 1922; McNaughton to A. J. McPhail, 17 July 1922; A. J. McPhail to McNaughton, 13 August 1922.

[123] Courville, pp. 160-67.

[124] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1924, pp. 119-32, 134-35. Maharg did not give up the presidency without a struggle. In his address to the delegates before the balloting took place he claimed that various unnamed individuals were out to

While the Grain Growers were abandoning the provincial field altogether, the Saskatchewan Provincial Progressive Association was taking steps to strengthen its organization in preparation for the next general election. The first step was to choose a successor to J. A. Maharg, who resigned as leader of the Opposition group in the Legislature early in February for what were announced as "personal and business reasons." The sixteen Independent M.L.A.'s chose as his replacement Harris Turner, and the member for Saskatoon agreed to serve on the understanding that he would act as House leader only.[125]

The second step, the drafting of a provincial platform for the new farmers' party, was entrusted to a larger convention of party supporters which took place in Saskatoon later in the summer.

"get" the various "Co-op" men on the S.G.G.A. executive "... because we have been in the way ... in backing some things that they wanted to put over, and which we thought were not in the best interests of the Association." To this Edwards replied that the question was not one of personalities, but simply "... whether or not one man can serve in several capacities ...." Edwards even offered to withdraw his name if Maharg would agree to resign from the Saskatchewan "Co-op," but Maharg did not indicate that he was prepared to do so. Edwards won easily, by a vote of 264 to 198. (*McPhail Diary*, pp. 57-58.) In addition to Maharg's growing unpopularity on account of the multiplicity of offices which he held, the fact that he had not yet turned in a signed Wheat Pool contract doubtless counted against him in the eyes of many delegates at the 1924 convention in Moose Jaw. (*Progressive*, 31 January 1924.)

[125] *Progressive*, 7 February 1924.

In addition to the Independent M.L.A.'s led by Harris Turner, the gathering attracted at least two Progressive M.P.'s from Ottawa, John Evans and A. C. Carmichael, and another, Dr. Hugh Maclean, who had unsuccessfully contested the Regina seat for the Progressives in the 1921 federal election. Also present were Grain Growers like F. S. Wilbur who had led the fight to commit the organized farmers to provincial political action at the 1920 and 1921 S.G.G.A. conventions, and a former member of the Nonpartisan League, Boa Z. Haight, who had run in 1917 in Thunder Creek. It was little wonder that the *Progressive* should have reported that "the general feeling of the meeting was that Saskatchewan had suffered in the past and was suffering at the present time from too much insistence on party politics in the Legislative Assembly and that the best interests of the Province demanded the election of a Legislature divorced from any attachment to the two old political parties."[126]

This dislike of the party system was reflected in the platform approved at the convention. It called for a fixed term for the Legislative Assembly, so that governments would no longer be able to hold the threat of an election over the heads of their supporters when issues were being decided. Other electoral and legislative reforms were also promised, including a reduction of the size of the Legislature by one-third and the adoption of the single transferable vote. The rest of the platform was quite unremarkable. The new party pledged itself to strict economy in the construction of public buildings, a reduction in the number of civil servants and a reorganization of government departments, greater encouragement of co-operative marketing schemes, prompt transfer of the lands and resources of Saskatchewan to provincial control, completion of the Hudson Bay railway and Senate reform.[127] The pledge of economical administration was perhaps attractive in a time of deflation and depression, but Premier Dunning was already paring government expenditures to the bone,[128] and there was little else in the platform to which the Liberals could not agree. The convention also approved plans for organizing every constituency in the province and collecting funds, and the work was entrusted to a committee of twenty headed by Harris Turner. No effort was made to select a permanent party leader. That task, it was agreed, would be left to a more representative meeting to be convened at some future date.[129]

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[126] *Ibid.*, 7 August 1924.

After three years of inactivity Saskatchewan Conservatism was also showing new signs of life by 1924. Organization work had been all but neglected since the electoral disaster of June 1921, and local party supporters had made no attempt to fill the vacancy created by Donald Maclean's resignation as provincial leader.[130] It was the federal Conservatives who took the initiative to put the party in a stronger position in Saskatchewan.[131] At two conventions in December 1923 and March 1924 steps were taken to re-establish a party organization throughout the province, draft a platform and select a new leader, Dr. J. T. M. Anderson.

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[127] *Ibid.*, 21 August 1924.

[128] Brennan, "Public Career of C. A. Dunning", pp. 106-12.

[129] *Progressive*, 7 August 1924.

Dr. Anderson was well known in the province for his work among the "New Canadians." In recognition of his expertise he had been appointed Director of Education Among the New Canadians in 1918.[132] The government had not intended that the appointment be a permanent one; indeed Premier Martin had made it clear to Anderson from the beginning "... that the work could not be regarded as permanent but only until such time as the method so successfully applied by Dr. Anderson in his own inspectorate had been absorbed and applied by the ordinary school inspectors of the Province."[133] It had been expected that this would take about two years, but it was not until after Dunning became Premier that the first mention was made of abolishing Anderson's post. Anderson had apparently wished to be appointed to the Saskatoon inspectorate, where he could continue to oversee the work of improving the non-English schools in the northern part of the province, and pressed for a salary that would be commensurate with these responsibilities. Instead, the government had returned him to the field as an ordinary inspector at Saskatoon, effective 1 November 1922, and reduced his salary.[134] It was claimed by some at the time that Anderson's post had been abolished on account of pressure from those "New Canadians" whose electoral support had helped to keep the Liberals in office, and others have suggested that Dunning may have feared Anderson's growing reputation.[135] Whatever the explanation, Anderson must certainly have been disappointed at this turn of events, and it appears that for a time he seriously considered a career in law.[136]

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[130] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, D. J. Wylie to Meighen, 15 February 1922, p. 37481; E. T. Myers to Meighen, 17 February 1922, p. 37490; A. J. Gibson to Meighen, 24 July 1923, pp. 68892-94.

[131] *Ibid.*, Meighen to E. T. Myers, etc., 5 November 1923, pp. 76884-85.

[132] *Supra*, p. 397.

[133] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to Rev. C. Endicott, 27 October 1922, p. 44154.

Why he chose instead to accept the leadership of the Conservative party, or why the position was indeed offered to him is not at all clear. Anderson had taken no active part in politics up to this time, though as a government employee he had of course been expected to do what he could for the Liberal party in his district.[137] The negotiations between Anderson and those who were attempting to revive the Conservative party were conducted in the strictest secrecy, for any other course would almost certainly have resulted in his instant dismissal from the Department of Education.[138] There were other complications as well. Some Moose Jaw Conservatives were only prepared to have Anderson appointed "field leader and organizer." Others in Regina suspected Anderson's loyalty to their party in view of his long association with a Liberal provincial government.[139] These difficulties were eventually cleared away, and at a second convention in Moose Jaw on 25 March J. T. M. Anderson was unanimously chosen to lead the Conservative party.[140] Anderson's political ability was an unknown quantity, but at least one Conservative regarded him as "... the modern Moses we have been looking for in this province to lead us out of the political wilderness which we have been wandering in for the last 20 years."[141]

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[134] AS, S. J. Latta Papers, A. H. Ball to Latta, 13 May 1924; undated memorandum re Dr. J. T. M. Anderson.

[135] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Rev. C. Endicott to Dunning, 25 October 1922, pp. 44151-52; Smith, pp. 129-30.

[136] AS, S. J. Latta Papers, J. A. Cross to Latta, 17 March 1924.

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[137] AS, J. A. Calder Papers, Series P(7), J. T. M. Anderson to Calder, 7 May 1912; Calder to J. T. M. Anderson, 22 May 1912.

[138] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. R. Wilson to Meighen, 1 April 1924, p. 77306.

[139] *Ibid.*, W. D. Dunlop to Meighen, 15 February 1924, p. 76998; H. E. Munroe to Meighen, 18 February 1924, p. 77011; M. A. MacPherson to Meighen, 7 April 1924, pp. 77362-63.

[140] *Ibid.*, J. F. Bryant to Meighen, 10 March 1924, p. 77034; J. R. Wilson to Meighen, 25 March 1924, p. 77041. Anderson was also named party organizer at this convention.

This second convention also gave its approval to a comprehensive platform. Although it was largely the work of J. F. Bryant,[142] an ardent Conservative who as president of the School Trustees' Association had been in the thick of the fight to ban "foreign" languages from Saskatchewan schools during the war, the platform was a remarkably moderate document. On the question of education, for example, it promised only that the Conservatives would reform the school system, in both curriculum and administration, to improve the quality of instruction in the country districts. It said nothing at all about separate schools or the special status which French continued to enjoy in the province's classrooms as a result of the School Act amendments of 1918. The most important question facing Saskatchewan voters, so far as the Conservatives were concerned, was the need for economy in government and an adherence to "sound business principles." The convention denounced what it termed Dunning's "orgy of extravagance" in his seven years as Provincial Treasurer and pledged the party to reduce Saskatchewan's "heavy load of debt" and "crushing burden of taxation" by reducing the size of the civil service, amalgamating government departments and restricting capital expenditures. There were as well pledges to assist farmers in marketing their products, establish an active provincial immigration policy and develop the province's natural resources.[143] Armed with this platform, the Conservatives' "modern Moses" set about the task of reviving his virtually moribund party.

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[141] *Ibid.*, W. D. Dunlop to Meighen, 5 March 1924, p. 77024.

[142] *Ibid.*, J. F. Bryant to Meighen, 28 February 1924, pp. 77028-29.

Anderson's labours, and indeed politics generally, were to be overshadowed during the summer of 1924 by preparations for Saskatchewan's third vote on the question of prohibition. The pressure for another vote on this contentious issue had come from a diverse assortment of public bodies and private individuals who shared the conviction that the Saskatchewan Temperance Act had demonstrably failed to prevent residents of the province from obtaining liquor. Such sentiments were already much in evidence by the early 1920's, when even some Liberals and some Liberal newspapers had become openly critical of Saskatchewan's prohibition law,[144] and the pendulum of public opinion continued to swing away from the prohibitionists during the decade. What was to be their last victory came in December 1922, when the remaining export houses were abolished by federal order-in-council after Regina had exhausted every means of curbing their operations by provincial legislation.[145] This removed one source of beverage alcohol from the province, but another still remained to bedevil those charged with the enforcement of the law: "home-brew." The illicit distillation of liquor was primarily a rural phenomenon, and the worst offender was popularly thought to be the immigrant from central or eastern Europe. "Home-brew" was manufactured chiefly for local consumption, and usually drunk within a few days of distillation, but community "stills" built to supply the needs of city bootleggers and their thirsty customers were not unheard of.[146] The "stills" were carefully concealed, of course, and therefore difficult to detect, but law enforcement officers did make some spectacular seizures.[147] For every "still" discovered and destroyed, it was commonly accepted that nineteen others continued to operate unmolested. Of the 1606 investigations of infractions of the Inland Revenue Act made by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police during the year ending 3 September 1922, 962 were in Saskatchewan. Using this rule of thumb, one newspaper concluded that there were perhaps as many as 20,000 illicit stills in the province, or approximately one for every fifth farm.[148]

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[143] *Leader,* 26 March 1924.

[144] *Supra,* pp. 520-24.

[145] Brennan, "Public Career of C. A. Dunning," pp. 133-38. Indeed the courts had again found in the summer of 1922 that the provincial government had overstepped its jurisdiction in attempting to drive the export houses out of business. In a unanimous judge-

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ment handed down on 30 June 1922 the Saskatchewan Court of Appeal had declared that the amendment to the Saskatchewan Temperance Act which provided that liquor could not be transported by automobile but only by common carrier was *ultra vires* in so far as it applied to liquor for export. (*C.A.R.*, 1922, p. 796.)

[146] Pinno, pp. 215-16.

[147] See, for example, *Leader*, 5 September 1922.

[148] *Ibid.*, 6 April 1923.

It was conditions such as these which contributed to the growing public dissatisfaction with the working out of the Saskatchewan Temperance Act. The S.A.R.M., for example, had not formally discussed the prohibition question in four years, but in March 1922 its annual convention called for a referendum on the re-establishment of government dispensaries.[149] A Temperance Reform League was launched in Regina in May "to assist temperance and oppose prohibition and other coercive measures." The meeting was attended by over 500 Regina citizens, including unofficial representatives from the Great War Veterans' Association, the Trades and Labour Council, the Regina Merchants' Association and the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches.[150] Similar organizations soon began to appear in other communities in the province. To co-ordinate the efforts of these various anti-prohibition groups the Moderation League of Saskatchewan was formed at a meeting in Regina in July.[151] Modelled on an organization of the same name in Manitoba, and composed of "leading churchmen, professional and businessmen," its avowed purpose was to "bring pressure to bear on the Legislature to enact legislation that can be enforced to the moral and financial benefit of all."[152]

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[149] *Ibid.*, 11 March 1922.

[150] *Ibid.*, 27 May 1922.

[151] *Ibid.*, 15 June 1922, 20 July 1922.

The Moderation League proceeded to circulate a petition throughout the province asking for government control and sale of all liquor and retail sale of beer, with the net revenue to be used for road building and for relief of taxation in school districts. This petition, bearing 65,075 names, was tabled in the Legislature on 23 February 1923.[153] Representatives of the League subsequently met with the Premier and other members of the cabinet, and asked that the government test public opinion by means of a referendum if it was unwilling to introduce legislation giving effect to their wishes. In replying to the delegation Dunning commented that this was the first intimation his government had received that the Moderation League would be content with a referendum. He made no definite commitment to the League beyond declaring, as his predecessor had done on numerous occasions, that the government would not modify its liquor policy until convinced that the public desired such a change.[154]

The Moderation League's campaign for another vote on prohibition did not long go unchallenged. The Social Service Council urged rural municipal councils, churches, S.G.G.A. locals, Homemaker's Clubs and other organizations to make known to the government their "... opposition to any move looking to a return of a legalized traffic in intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes."[155] The Council also sponsored a prohibition convention in February 1923 to rally support for the Saskatchewan Temperance Act. It concluded that there was no sufficient reason to believe that the people had changed their minds. The annual Grain Growers' and School Trustees' conventions, as well as the Presbyterian Synod of Saskatchewan, the Methodist Conference of Saskatchewan, the Baptist Church and the W.C.T.U. had all recently expressed themselves in favour of a continuation of prohibition. The government's duty was plain: it must continue to enforce the law with all possible vigour.[156]

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[152] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Moderation League to the barristers of Saskatchewan, 27 December 1922, p. 7142.

[153] *Journals*, 1923, p. 38.

[154] *Leader*, 8 March 1923.

This sentiment was shared by the Premier himself, and the government decided not to alter its liquor policy. The decision was announced to the Legislature on 14 May 1923. While admitting that conditions were far from satisfactory and that there had been agitation in some quarters in favour of a change, Attorney-General J. A. Cross declared that the government did not plan to introduce the legislation requested by the Moderation League or submit the liquor question to a popular vote. It would continue, as in the past, to strictly enforce prohibition and attempt to foster greater respect for the law.[157]

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[155] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, memorial circulated by the Prohibition Committee of the Social Service Council, n.d., p. 7623.

[156] *Ibid.*, "Memorandum For Presentation To The Government of Saskatchewan," 28 February 1923, pp. 7721-22.

The Attorney-General's statement met with objections and criticism from a number of members on both sides of the Legislature.[158] The harshest censure came from the *Leader*, which condemned the Dunning government for timidity in dealing with a situation it knew should be remedied. "With the Saskatchewan Liquor Commission openly discredited and the Saskatchewan Temperance Act either brazenly opposed or regarded with indifference by the vast majority of the people of the province," it argued, "something more might be expected of the government than an admission that it can do nothing but continue to 'enforce' the act and keep a propagandist on the road to lecture the people on respect for the law." The question should be put to a vote, the government's chief newspaper organ believed, as was being done in Alberta and Manitoba.[159]

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[157] *Leader*, 15 March 1923. Dunning was influenced in this decision by his knowledge of conditions in British Columbia, where bootlegging was rampant in spite of the availability of liquor through government outlets. In Vancouver, especially, there existed a great number of private "clubs" which sold liquor freely to their members in open defiance of the law. Dunning was not anxious to see such a system of "so-called 'Moderation'" adopted in his province. (AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to E. W. Stapleford, 25 January 1923, pp. 6554-55.)

[158] *Leader*, 16-17 March 1923.

[159] *Ibid.*, 17 March 1923. The "propagandist" was Rev. John L. Nicol, who had been appointed Director of Temperance and Social Service in the Attorney-General's Department in 1921. Essentially a public relations officer, his function was to foster support for and obedience of the Saskatchewan Temperance Act. (Chambers, "Use of Plebiscite," p. 138.)

The Moderation League spent the summer working to increase its membership and to secure a larger number of signatures for a second petition. The prohibitionists, meanwhile, fought a rearguard action, doing their utmost to postpone as long as possible any change in the liquor law or consultation of the voters. When Premier Dunning confidentially informed Rev. Charles Endicott, a leading prohibitionist and fellow Liberal, that "... everything points to an exceedingly strong demand for a referendum at an early date, a demand which in all probability cannot properly be refused," the latter urged that the vote be held off as long as possible, and at least until the summer of 1924.[160] The Social Service Council was prepared to agree to another referendum, but not until the Saskatchewan Temperance Act had been given a fair test. Three years from 15 December 1922, the date on which the export houses had been put out of business, was considered the minimum period of time before another vote should be held.[161] The Prohibition League of Saskatchewan, formed in Regina later in the year to combat the efforts of the Moderation League, advocated a two year delay, as did the Grain Growers and the School Trustees.[162] On the other hand, the Qu'Appelle Synod of the Anglican Church favoured an immediate referendum.[163]

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[160] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to Rev. C. Endicott, 9 July 1922, p. 7821; Rev. C. Endicott to Dunning, 8 September 1922, pp. 7845-47.

[161] *Ibid.*, "Manifesto of The Prohibition Committee of The Social Service Council of Saskatchewan On The Present Temperance Situation," 1923, p. 7833.

[162] *Leader*, 29 November 1923; *Saskatoon Star*, 23 February 1924; AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1924, p. 154.

The Moderation League had set a goal of 120,000 signatures for its second petition. When it was finally presented to the government late in November 1923 it contained the smaller but still substantial figure of 79,003 names. Unlike the first, this one simply asked that immediate provision be made for a referendum on the liquor question. Dunning gave no hint of what the government's decision would be, but promised to present the petition to the Legislature and make a recommendation to that body.[164] He had refused to hold a vote in 1923, as the governments of Manitoba and Alberta had done, but in 1924 he came to the conclusion that the people would have to be consulted.

The Speech from the Throne opening the session of the Legislature on 31 January 1924 intimated that legislation would be brought down to provide for the taking of a vote at an early date.[165] The news was greeted with approval on both sides of the House. Indeed several M.L.A.'s who in previous years had objected to a referendum indicated during the Throne Speech debate that they had now changed their minds. As E. R. Ketcheson, the Liberal member for Hanley pointed out, with an eye perhaps to the next election, the wishes of nearly 80,000 voters simply could not be ignored.[166]

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[163] Chambers, "Use of Plebiscite," p. 153.

[164] *Leader*, 1 December 1923; Pinno, p. 259.

[165] *Journals*, 1924, p. 9.

It was the Attorney-General who outlined the provisions of the bill later in the session. Saskatchewan voters would be asked to indicate on 21 July whether they supported the principle of the province's prohibition law and, if not, whether in addition to government sale of liquor they wished the sale of beer in licensed premises.[167] The legislation received unanimous approval in principle, but there was considerable debate during committee stage, notably over the wording of the first question. A proposal which would have read "Are you in favour of the continuance of the Saskatchewan Temperance Act?" received only eight votes after Premier Dunning explained that such a question might be interpreted as a continuation of the Act in its present form, thus precluding amendments which many people felt were desirable. In the end, on the motion of the Attorney-General, and with only three dissenting votes cast, the first question was amended to read "Are you in favour of Prohibition in Saskatchewan?" The date of the plebiscite was also changed, to 16 July, so as not to conflict with the Saskatoon exhibition.[168]

Like the Wheat Pool drive that was just then winding up, the campaign that preceded the July vote stirred the emotions of the whole province. For weeks platforms, pulpits and editorial columns across Saskatchewan resounded with the arguments of prohibitionists and moderationists. The Prohibition League, its slogan "Saskatchewan Hold the Line," held a series of mass rallies which featured prominent Canadian "drys" as guest speakers. Not to be outdone, the Moderation League imported Dr. Michael Clark of Alberta to address a series of meetings. Both sides distributed lavish quantities of literature to woo the uncommitted, and the Moderation League mounted a massive publicity campaign in the province's daily and weekly newspapers, most of which favoured a return to government sale. Moderation League propaganda stressed the threat to individual liberty posed by prohibition and the social and economic evils which had allegedly followed in its wake, arguments that were hotly disputed by those who wished to see the ban on liquor continued. The Moderation League could also point to the fact that Alberta and Manitoba had recently rejected prohibition by large majorities, and this undoubtedly had some influence on Saskatchewan voters.[169]

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[166] *Leader*, 9 February 1924.

[167] *Ibid.*, 8 March 1924.

[168] *Journals*, 1924, p. 76; *Leader*, 22 March 1924; AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to J. M. Thomas, 22 March 1924, pp. 6745-46.

The plebiscite resulted in the defeat of the first question, "Are you in favour of Prohibition in Saskatchewan?" by 119,337 to 80,381, or a majority of 38,956. There was a smaller total vote on the second question, only 170,136. Of this number, 89,011 voted for the sale of liquor and beer in government stores, and 81,125 for the additional sale of beer in licensed premises. The vote was held on the provincial constituency boundaries: forty-five constituencies voted "wet" and fifteen voted to remain "dry." The vote for the sale of beer by the glass was almost evenly split, with twenty-three ridings voting in favour and twenty-two against. The strength of the moderationists lay in the cities, where a "dry" majority of 11,781 in 1916 was turned into a "wet" majority of 10,009 in 1924, but some rural areas, particularly those with a large concentration of European-born voters, also gave decisive majorities against prohibition. Nearly all the "dry" constituencies were in the central and southeastern portions of Saskatchewan, areas that were largely inhabited by people from the United States or eastern Canada.[170]

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[169] Pinno, pp. 266-85.

Premier Dunning had not been present in the province when the voting took place, but on his return he pledged that his government would "... present to the Legislature in due course such legislation as will give effect to the clearly expressed views of the electorate."[171] Advice as to how best to carry out the "clearly expressed views of the electorate" was not long in coming. The Moderation League and the Saskatchewan Hotelkeepers' Association pressed the government to adopt the Alberta practice and provide for the sale of beer by the glass in licensed premises. The easy accessibility of beer, they argued, would result in a decrease in the consumption of hard liquor, in bootlegging and in the manufacture of "home-brew."[172] With this Dunning was in general agreement. If there was to be a liquor system in the province it would be desirable that the mild forms of alcohol be easily accessible to the public in a legal manner, though this did not necessarily mean, he told the delegation from the Moderation League, that the government would permit the sale of beer in licensed premises.[173]

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[170] *Leader*, 18 July 1924, 15 August 1924.

[171] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, press statement issued by Dunning, 15 August 1924, p. 8302.

The results of the plebiscite was interpreted by the prohibitionist forces as precluding the sale of beer by the glass. The Prohibition League recommended a non-profit system of liquor sale with government outlets in as few places as possible, and with the provision of local option to prevent or remove a vending outlet. To this Dunning replied that to keep the number of stores down to anything like a minimum would not tend to reduce the illicit liquor traffic. He would not divulge what action his government was prepared to take, saying only that it was "bound by the vote to secure liquor in a legal fashion for the citizens of the province."[174] Many individuals with prohibitionist sympathies also wrote to the Premier, expressing their strong opposition to the establishment of "beer bars" and to the expense of local option campaigns so soon after the plebiscite. They objected as well to the press statement which had been issued by the then acting Premier, A. P. McNab, expressing regret at the defeat of beer by the glass, a statement which had never been repudiated by the Premier.[175]

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[172] *Ibid.*, Moderation League of Saskatchewan to Dunning, n.d., p. 8623; Saskatchewan Hotelkeepers' Association to Dunning, 11 September 1924, pp. 8377-78.

[173] *Leader*, 3 September 1924.

[174] *Ibid.*, 26 September 1924.

Premier Dunning had indicated in March that if the result of the plebiscite indicated a need for new liquor legislation, he would call the next session earlier than usual to deal with the matter.[176] While the Attorney-General remained in Regina to draft the new bill, most of his colleagues trekked north to Wynyard, where a by-election had been made necessary on account of the resignation of George Robertson to become full-time secretary of the Wheat Pool.[177] The Liberal candidate faced only one opponent, a Progressive. The Conservatives were by this time "well-organized" in fifteen constituencies and "spade work" had been commenced in a dozen others,[178] but Wynyard was not apparently among them, and the party declined to put up a man. The campaign was a pallid affair, but the result left no doubt as to the Liberals' popularity, for the government candidate was elected with a majority of 900.[179] The year had been an auspicious one for the Dunning government. In March W. H. MacKinnon, the Independent M.L.A. for Wadena, had crossed the floor of the House to sit as a Liberal,[180] in June a by-election in Cannington had gone to the government by acclamation,[181] and now Wynyard had gone to the government as well. Since assuming office in April 1922 Dunning had won nine successive by-elections. At a time when Liberal governments in the other prairie provinces had long since disappeared, Saskatchewan's remained standing, and had actually managed to strengthen its position in the Legislature.

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[175] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Rev. C. Endicott to Dunning, 29 August 1924, pp. 8329-30; Rev. H. Dobson to Dunning, 2 September 1924, pp. 8367-68.

[176] *Leader*, 8 March 1924.

[177] *Progressive*, 11 September 1924; *Leader*, 29 September 1924.

[178] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 3 October 1924, p. 77080.

The Liberals in Saskatchewan were not yet completely out of danger. Thinking ahead to the next general election, due by custom in 1925 and by law in 1926, and either way not now far off, Dunning was reluctant to renew his earlier efforts to restore relations with the federal wing of the Liberal party. When Mackenzie King toured the prairies later in the fall, Dunning took no part in the official reception held for the Prime Minister by the city of Regina. The Premier and his cabinet colleagues were also conspicuously absent from the platform at King's principal

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[179] *Legislative Directory*, p. 157.

[180] *Leader*, 18 March 1924.

[181] *Legislative Directory*, p. 96.

Regina meeting on 3 November.[182] "A curious position for a Govt. with a strong Liberal following," King later noted in his diary,[183] but in this he was wrong. The Saskatchewan Premier had already made one attempt to reunite the federal and provincial wings of the Liberal party, and had jeopardized his own political position in the process. Once burned, twice wary: notwithstanding his recent victory in Wynyard, Dunning clearly did not think conditions favourable enough for a second attempt at reconciliation.

On 13 November the fifth and, in the opinion of some political observers at least,[184] the last session of the Fifth Legislative Assembly opened in Regina. The liquor bill was the only new legislation forecast in the Speech from the Throne,[185] and J. A. Cross presented it to the House two weeks later. It provided for the establishment of a Liquor Board which would have the general control, management and supervision of the government liquor stores. Voters were given the right to petition either for or against a store in any community, but no provision was made for the sale of beer in licensed premises.[186]

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[182] *Leader,* 4 November 1924.

[183] *King Diaries,* 3 November 1924.

[184] *Western Producer,* 13 November 1924.

[185] *Journals,* 1924-25, pp. 7-9.

[186] *Leader,* 3 December 1924.

In large measure the legislation reflected Premier Dunning's own personal attitudes on the subject. He was opposed to control of the liquor business by private interests, and at the same time was wary of government sale, but chose the latter as the lesser of two evils. As he explained to the House during debate on second reading of the bill, the government had tried to maintain the best gains that had been made in the experience with the government dispensaries and with the Saskatchewan Temperance Act. He did not believe, as some had already suggested, that those constituencies which had voted "dry" should be kept "dry" and those which voted for the sale of liquor or even of beer by the glass should be given what they wanted on a local option basis. The plebiscite had been taken on a province-wide basis, he reminded the House, on the understanding that any legislation resulting from the vote would be applied to the province as a whole, and not individually in each constituency. The local veto provisions in the bill did not depart from this principle. "Giving the people the right to veto the establishment of stores in their community ..." he emphasized, "is different entirely from giving them the right to determine to have in their community what the whole people declared should not be allowed in any community."[187]

The bill was generally well received by those groups that had argued for a continuation of prohibition. The secretary of the Prohibition League, Rev. Hugh Dobson, wrote to Dunning commending his speech in the Legislature and expressing satisfaction with the liquor legislation introduced by the government as "a fair attempt to express the mind of the electorate as it could be interpreted from the Plebiscite ...."[188] The Moderation League was not at all happy with the new legislation, believing that it favoured the prohibitionists. Its secretary described the bill as "unfair and unworkable," one which would not "tend towards sobriety or respect for the law."[189] The same sentiments were echoed by the House leader of the Opposition group, Harris Turner, who complained that the spirit behind the government's new liquor bill was "... really the spirit which actuated ... people to vote for the Saskatchewan Temperance Act." The many technicalities and restrictions embodied in the bill were "bound to result in conditions perhaps not as bad as we have had them but conditions which will not be good for the province and which will result in another revulsion of feeling in a few years." He believed that the sale of beer ought to be permitted in licensed premises, but only a handful of Liberal and Opposition members agreed with him.[190] The liquor bill passed second reading without a formal division, and after detailed consideration in Committee of the Whole was approved and became law early in 1925.[191]

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[187] *Ibid.*, 11 December 1924.

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[188] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Rev. H. Dobson to Dunning, 20 December 1924, pp. 8830-31.

[189] *Ibid.*, A. T. Hunter to Dunning, 8 December 1925, p. 7271.

[190] *Leader*, 9-11 December 1924.

When the Legislature reassembled after the Christmas recess, the signs of an approaching general election became more and more unmistakable. By 1925 Dunning apparently regarded the Conservative party as the greater threat, fearing that it might "absorb a certain number of the saner and more level-headed farmers and endanger his chances in three-cornered contests.[192] He devoted a considerable portion of his budget address on 9 January to a rebuttal of the charges of waste and extravagance that had been levelled against him by the Conservatives at their recent leadership convention. Although Saskatchewan's population had increased by 20 per cent since he entered the government in 1916, and large additional outlays had been necessary for schools and hospitals, and new programmes such as the farm loan scheme and mothers' allowances, he told the House, the provincial tax burden had increased from $2.30 per capita to only $2.71 per capita during that time. Dunning pointed with particular pride to his handling of the province's finances in the face of the difficult conditions caused by the postwar depression. Slight increases in revenue had not been large enough to meet increases in expenditures, and a deficit of over $2,000,000 had resulted by 1924. While the economy of the province continued to mark time he had followed a policy of retrenchment rather than impose a gasoline tax or other new levies. Controllable expenditures had been reduced by 20 per cent between 1922 and 1924, and in 1925 Dunning was able to announce a small budget surplus.

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[191] *Ibid.*, 11 December 1924, 13 December 1924, 16-20 December 1924, 15-17 January 1925; Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 15 Geo. V. Chapter 53.

[192] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, C. Sifton to Dafoe, 28 January 1925.

This policy of retrenchment had not been reflected in the costs of education, since most educational expenditures were fixed by statute, and since the number of schools and pupils had continued to increase. As Dunning pointed out, the government could perhaps have reduced education costs by introducing a scale of grants similar to those in effect in other provinces. Adopting the grant structure of either Alberta or Manitoba would have saved the provincial government $750,000 annually in the one case or $800,000 in the other. This would not have decreased the burden of education costs of the people of Saskatchewan, but simply transferred that burden to the school districts. Similarly, the statutory fixing of the size of hospital grants and mothers' allowances made it difficult to cut costs for welfare, though again, as Dunning pointed out, there had been no indication that the people wished the government to do so. He challenged his critics, and particularly that "... critic [who] was a civil servant before he entered the employ of the Conservative party of this province" to refute his claim that Saskatchewan still boasted a lower per capita public debt than either of its neighbours.[193]

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[193] *Budget Speech,* 9 January 1925, pp. 9-20.

It was a fighting speech, and it set the tone for the Liberals' campaign for re-election that began shortly after the session ended and culminated in victory on 2 June. As they criss-crossed the province, the Premier and his ministers returned again and again to a defence of their record in giving Saskatchewan economical administration. They never tired of reminding voters that in pursuing a policy of financial retrenchment which had reduced controllable expenditures by 21 per cent since 1922 the government had placed the province "in an excellent position to take advantage of improvements in world conditions." There were as well the usual recitations of the Liberals' record of assistance to Saskatchewan farmers, and a pledge to investigate the feasibility of developing a provincial power scheme to supply cheap power to industry and agriculture.[194]

This last proposal was an outgrowth of the provincial government's continuing interest in the commercial possibilities of the lignite deposits in the Estevan-Bienfait area. It had been co-operating with the federal and Manitoba governments in experiments to find a process for converting this soft coal into a high quality fuel. By 1923, when Manitoba withdrew from the partnership, nearly $1,000,000 had been spent on the work. A successful process for briquetting Saskatchewan lignite had been developed, but there were still serious doubts as to whether the product could compete with the cheaper Alberta coal which had largely supplanted the more costly American anthracite as a domestic heating fuel on the prairies since the war.[195] Ottawa and Regina had continued the experiments for another three months, but at that point the briquetting plant at Bienfait had been closed down. The federal government turned over its equity in the plant to the province, and by the time of the provincial elections the Dunning government was seeking to interest private capital in operating the plant.[196]

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[194] *Kerrobert Citizen*, 1 April 1925; *Kindersley Clarion*, 23 April 1925; *Prairie News* (Govan), 27 May 1925; *Leader*, 11 May 1925, 2 June 1925.

In the meantime it had returned to the idea, first advanced by R. O. Wynne-Roberts in 1913,[197] of producing electric power at the Souris coal fields and transmitting it throughout the province. Such a scheme had not appeared feasible at the time, Dunning declared in a speech at Estevan, but recent improvements in the transmission of power over long distances convinced the government that it should take a second look at the whole question. He painted a glowing picture of the benefits that would accrue to Saskatchewan if large supplies of cheap power could be made available. The effects of drought and deflation had made the provincial government more convinced than ever that Saskatchewan "should get away from a lopsided development as represented in seasonal cereal agriculture" and cheap power was the key that would unlock a brighter future for the province.[198]

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[195] *Leader*, 31 August 1923; AS, Department of Public Works Records, File 259, R. N. Blackburn to J. G. Gardiner, n.d., pp. 6-8. This report was obviously prepared by Blackburn, Chief Mechanical Superintendent with the Department of Public Works, in 1922 or 1923, before Manitoba decided to withdraw from the scheme.

[196] *Leader*, 26 September 1923, 19 January 1924, 27 August 1924, 16 September 1924, 25 March 1925.

[197] *Supra*, pp. 201-202.

There was another side to Liberal election campaigns in Saskatchewan: the work of the political organization built by J. A. Calder during his career in provincial politics and brought to a state of unparalleled efficiency by "Jimmy" Gardiner. Much of the success that was to be attributed to the "Gardiner machine" was simply the result of the party's uninterrupted control of the government and of government patronage. The offer of a job or a contract, or a road or a public building had long served as a powerful inducement to an individual voter or a whole constituency to support the Liberal candidate. Control of the government had also given the Liberals control of the civil service, and this had proved to be of immense advantage to the party at election time, when virtually the whole of the civil service was available for political chores.[199]

By the time Gardiner assumed responsibility for organization matters in 1922, much of the day-to-day work of keeping the party machinery in fine tune was entrusted to a corps of "road inspectors" in the Department of Highways. Though nominally employed by the government to oversee the construction and repair of the province's expanding network of highways, their real function was to serve the Liberal party,[200] and they did so with a zeal that could hardly fail to escape public notice. W. M. Martin had played down the influence of the "machine" during his tenure as Premier, going so far on one occasion as to deny emphatically that patronage still existed to any degree in his government.[201] His successor was not as circumspect. Under Gardiner's expert direction the Liberal organization assumed its former prominence and criticism of the "machine methods" employed by the government became more pronounced. Harris Turner had warned voters in Milestone of the evils of a "menacing machine" in 1923 and it was given a prominent place in both the Progressive and Conservative campaigns during the general election two years later.

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[198] *Leader,* 22 May 1925.

[199] The lament of one defeated Conservative candidate in Regina after the 1925 election could have been uttered by any of the government's opponents who had felt the weight of a partisan civil service used against them over the years: "The Parliament buildings were closed on election day and practically every one of the civil servants were working hard on the job of returning the government." (PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. F. Bryant to Meighen, 4 June 1925, p. 77402.)

Both parties attacked the Dunning government for its wasteful expenditure of public funds, and blamed much of the waste on its blatant use of patronage to maintain itself in office. An inefficient and padded civil service, costly and poorly planned highways and public buildings and uneconomical government purchasing had resulted in increased expenses of government, the Progressives argued.[202] All residents of the province were obliged to meet this added burden through higher taxes, and the main issue before the voters was clearly whether the people of Saskatchewan were willing to tolerate any longer the "skilfully organized, expensive, patronage-fed organization" that had been constructed by the Liberals during their twenty years in power.[203] It was time, Harris Turner told a meeting in Saskatoon, to put an end to the situation where everyone in the employ of the government was a servant of the Liberal party and it behooved anyone who desired a government job or a government contract to take out a party membership.[204] The Conservatives also attacked the "machine,"[205] though with less vigour than the Progressives, for Anderson and his colleagues were striving to build one of their own. In this they were hampered by a lack of money, which from the outset had plagued Anderson's efforts to breathe new life into the party in

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[200] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, T. Plante to Gardiner, 16 June 1923, p. 2735; J. Androchowicz to J. M. Uhrich, 25 June 1923, p. 3199; J. M. Uhrich to Gardiner, 31 July 1925, p. 2885. For a more detailed discussion of the work on these "road inspectors," see Reid, pp. 28-38 *passim*.

[201] *Leader*, 6 May 1920.

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[202] PAC, W. C. Good Papers, T. A. Patrick to Good, 30 March 1925, p. 7060; *Saskatoon Star*, 24 April 1925; *Leader*, 16 May 1925, 19 May 1925; *Landis Record*, 20 May 1925.

[203] *Western Producer*, 14 May 1925.

[204] *Saskatoon Star*, 27 April 1925.

[205] *Leader*, 28 April 1925, 27 May 1925; *Saskatoon Star*, 11 May 1925; *Kerrobert Citizen*, 29 April 1925.

Saskatchewan.[206]

Both of the opposition parties were also handicapped by the absence of a strong press to carry the fight to the government. Initially the *Progressive* had devoted a good deal of attention to the provincial Progressives, and the fact that its editor was leader of the Opposition group in the Legislature seemed to ensure the paper's unqualified support at the time of the next provincial election. This was not to be so, for in September 1924 the paper changed its name to the *Western Producer* and adopted a more politically neutral stance.[207] This decision must certainly have come as a bitter blow to the hopes of the provincial Progressives. Though they constituted the main opposition to the Liberal government in 1925, with forty candidates in the field,[208] they were given no significant press support during the campaign. The *Western Producer* remained essentially neutral, while the *Grain Growers' Guide* ignored the campaign altogether.

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[206] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 28 April 1924, p. 77052; same to same, 26 December 1924, p. 77114; same to same, 26 March 1925, pp. 54801-802; same to same, 26 April 1925, pp. 77182-83.

[207] *Progressive,* 11 September 1924. Two reasons were given at the time in explanation of this change. In the first place, some officials of the S.G.G.A. had been concerned that the paper's title gave the impression that the farmers' organization was still rigidly bound to one or both of the political parties bearing the name Progressive. Moreover, the directors of the Wheat Pool and the publishers of the paper believed that the retention of such a politically suggestive name would hamper Pool publicity work.

[208] *Legislative Directory,* pp. 91-158.

The Conservatives fared little better. They had no daily newspaper, although a regular editorial column, "The Conservative View Point," had been appearing in the Moose Jaw *Times* ever since that newspaper had absorbed its Conservative rival, the *News*, in 1920.[209] This was not enough. "So far receiving any news or editorial opinions at all favorable to the Conservative party," one Regina Conservative readily admitted, "... the 800,000 people in Saskatchewan might as well be in central Africa."[210] It was almost impossible even to get a fair report of Conservative meetings in the predominantly Liberal press.[211] The simplest solution was also the most expensive: starting a new daily newspaper would cost perhaps as much as $250,000, a sum far beyond the means of any local Conservatives.[212] Instead, the party attempted to establish or purchase a weekly newspaper or secure editorial control of one or more of the existing dailies. None of these schemes had borne fruit by the time the Dunning government issued the writs for the 1925 election,[213] and the Conservatives went into that contest without any means of regularly presenting their point of view to voters across the province. In contrast, the Liberals could rely upon the support of the editorial pages and news columns of the six daily newspapers in Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Prince Albert, and most weeklies in Saskatchewan towns and villages.

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[209] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, A. J. Wickens to R. Rogers, n.d., p. 68988.

[210] *Ibid.*, C. B. Keenleyside to M. A. MacPherson, 23 August 1924, p. 68944.

[211] *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 3 October 1924, p. 77079.

[212] *Ibid.*, R. E. Turnbull to S. F. Tolmie, 24 August 1923, pp. 68900-904; C. B. Keenleyside to M. A. MacPherson, 23 August 1924, p. 68944.

[213] Brennan, "Press and Party," pp. 87-88.

The Conservatives had hoped to have candidates in forty or fifty ridings by nomination day, but in fact they had only eighteen.[214] Early in the campaign Anderson apparently approached the Progressives with a proposal for some sort of arrangement which would avoid three-cornered contests in rural ridings.[215] Harris Turner stoutly denied that any agreement had been reached,[216] but the Liberals remained convinced that there was "... an arrangement between the Tories and the so-called Provincial Progressives whereby Tories are nominated to run as Progressives"[217] and lost no opportunity to draw this unholy alliance to the attention of the voters.[218] The *Leader* went so far as to claim that over three-quarters of the Progressive candidates nominated were "rank Tories."[219]

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[214] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 6 April 1925, p. 77171.

[215] PAC, W. C. Good Papers, T. A. Patrick to Good, 30 March 1925, p. 7059; Arthur Meighen Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 6 April 1925, p. 77173; same to same, 26 April 1925, p. 77183.

[216] *Leader*, 24 March 1925; *Saskatoon Star*, 11 April 1925.

[217] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. R. Motherwell, 2 May 1925, pp. 47204-205.

[218] *Leader*, 8 April 1925, 19 May 1925, 28 May 1925; *Saskatoon Star*, 29 May 1925.

The possibility of a return to the familiar party alignments of prewar days was doubtless appealing to many Liberals in the province,[220] and they devoted special attention to the new Conservative leader during the campaign. As in the days of old, Saskatchewan farmers were warned that a vote for J. T. M. Anderson was a vote for the high tariff policy of the federal Conservative party.[221] When the audience contained a significant proportion of voters whose mother tongue was not English, the Liberals invariably produced a copy of Anderson's now-famous book and attacked him for belittling the "New Canadian."[222] To refute Anderson's claims that further reductions could be made in government spending without affecting the level of service provided to the public, the *Leader* reproduced extracts from his reports as a civil servant to show that he had himself recommended larger expenditures.[223]

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[219] *Leader,* 28 May 1925. The *Leader*'s claim may be open to question, but it was a fact that in all but five rural constituencies the Liberal candidate faced only one opponent, either a Conservative or a Progressive, or, in a very few instances, an Independent. (*Legislative Directory,* pp. 91-158.)

[220] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, G. W. Sahlmark to Gardiner, 27 March 1924, pp. 2875-77; Gardiner to C. McDonald, 27 February 1925, p. 3561.

[221] *Leader,* 18 February 1925, 19 March 1925, 22 May 1925; *Saskatoon Star,* 14 May 1925.

[222] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to A. Leontowicz, 23 March 1925, p. 3778; *Saskatoon Star,* 16 April 1925, 29 May 1925; *Leader,* 1 June 1925.

In the last weeks of the contest the Liberals launched an all-out attack against the Progressives and Conservatives. Premier Dunning scornfully referred to them as a "double-jointed opposition" appearing to be all things to all people. They had not criticized the government's expenditures in the Legislature, although they had had ample opportunity to do so. Now they were accusing him of extravagance.[224] The two opposition parties were united in only one thing -- defeating the government. The voters deserved to know what either of his opponents would do if he should form the next government, but they were not being told. The Liberals pointed to the expensive errors of government by "group" in Ontario and declared that Saskatchewan would have to decide on 2 June between "responsible government or chaos."[225]

The Liberals were returned with fifty seats, including three by acclamation. This was three more than they had held at dissolution, though their share of the total popular vote showed another small decline as compared to the previous election, from 52.2 per cent in 1921 to 51.5 per cent in 1925. Liberal victories in the deferred contests in Ile à la Crosse and Cumberland increased the government's strength in the Legislature to fifty-two. The Provincial Progressives won only six seats and the Conservatives three. The entire Dunning cabinet, with the exception of the Attorney-General, J. A. Cross, was returned to office. In contrast, Harris Turner, the most prominent critic of the government in the Fifth Legislature, was defeated in Saskatoon by Dr. Anderson, and five of Turner's colleagues also failed to win re-election to the House.[226]

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[223] *Leader*, 4 March 1925, 29 April 1925.

[224] *Ibid.*, 18 May 1925, 25 May 1925; *Saskatoon Star*, 28 May 1925.

[225] *Leader*, 13 May 1925, 27 May 1925, 2 June 1925.

It was, as Dunning reported to Mackenzie King with obvious pleasure "a sweeping endorsation from the people of Saskatchewan."[227] No single factor was responsible for the Liberal victory in 1925. The record of the Dunning government, the Premier's own personal popularity and political ability, the effective party organization managed by J. G. Gardiner, and the weakness of its political opponents all accounted in some measure for the result on 2 June. As for the first, the Premier and his colleagues had certainly shown skill in administering the province's affairs, considering the difficult economic situation which had confronted them in 1922. The decision to economize rather than follow the example of Alberta and Manitoba in levying new taxes typefied the outlook of a government Liberal in name but conservative in outlook, a government more intent upon consolidating existing services than in expanding to meet new needs or creating new needs to meet. The depression and the difficulty of finding new sources of revenue in a rural province like Saskatchewan had perhaps made Dunning's policy the only practicable one, but in any event his stress on the need for economy and retrenchment had been echoed by both the Progressives and Conservatives. In terms of basic issues, then, there had been little to choose among the three parties in 1925.

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[226] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 91-158; Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," p. 344. Cross continued as a member of the cabinet, and one of the Liberal back-benchers resigned to enable the Attorney-General to resume his place in the Legislature. (*Legislative Directory*, p. 156.)

[227] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 4 June 1925, p. 97152.

The weakness of the government's opponents was only too readily apparent. Three Conservatives had been elected, despite a lack of money and "a couple of good newspapers to carry the message through the province,"[228] but with only eighteen candidates in the field that party had posed no real threat to the Liberal regime at Regina. J. T. M. Anderson could draw some satisfaction from the knowledge that he had managed to re-establish the party as a significant force in the province. It had, after all, polled 18.4 per cent of the popular vote,[229] and the election of the Conservative leader and of M. A. MacPherson, the well-known Regina lawyer who had beaten J. A. Cross, would provide the nucleus of a strong party in the House. What was equally important, Anderson was confident that he could count on the support of all the M.L.A.'s elected in opposition to the government. "The new Opposition nominally consists of 3 Cons., 6 Prog., 1 Indep. & 1 Indep. Prog.," he confided to the federal organizer for the Conservative party shortly after the election, "... 10 of the 11 are Tories and the other, Dr. Creighton, of Estevan was nominated at and by a Tory Convention at which I was present." This, he believed, would give the party "... a stronger nucleus for further action than we ever had."[230]

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[228] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, W. W. Davidson to Meighen, 9 June 1925, pp. 77414-15.

[229] Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," p. 344.

And what of Harris Turner and the provincial Progressives? Twice the farmers had challenged the dominant position of the Liberals. In 1921 they had failed to unseat the Martin government and now, four years later, they had again gone down to defeat at the hands of his successor. The Progressives were clearly hampered by the absence of a strong organization,[231] and by the unwillingness of either farmers' association in Saskatchewan to support them at the critical time. In part this was indicative of a shift in emphasis within the farmers' movement, and particularly within the S.G.G.A. The enthusiasm which marked the organization of the Wheat Pool undoubtedly led many farmers to look to economic rather than political reform for a solution of their problems. For the farmers' political movement in Saskatchewan, the 1921 election had come too early, the 1925 contest too late. In 1921 the S.G.G.A. had not yet sanctioned a provincial farmers' party -- that had come later -- but by 1925 the S.G.G.A. had withdrawn from politics altogether. As for the Farmers' Union, it had eschewed direct participation in politics from the beginning. The federal Progressives might well have been expected to provide encouragement and assistance to the provincial party, considering that part of the *raison d'être* of the Saskatchewan Provincial Progressive Association had been to preserve the gains already made by the farmers in the federal field. Some Progressive M.P.'s did look with favour upon the organization of a provincial farmers' party, notably those who had attended its first provincial convention in Saskatoon. There were others, though, who made no secret of their opposition to the "'so-called' provincial Progressives" because of their hostility to the provincial Liberals.[232]

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[230] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to S. F. Tolmie, 6 June 1925, p. 77426.

[231] PAC, W. C. Good Papers, T. A. Patrick to Good, 30 March 1925, p. 7059.

Lacking a strong issue with which to confront the government, and lacking the wholehearted support of the S.G.G.A. and the federal Progressives, Turner had proved to be no match for the well-organized Liberals or for the man who led them after April 1922. The Liberal party organization headed by J. G. Gardiner was regarded with a mixture of fear and admiration by its many victims, who doubtless would have agreed with R. M. Johnson that "only one who has observed the workings of the grit machine in this province can form an idea of how vicious it is."[233] In the last analysis, though, it was Dunning, not Gardiner and the "machine," who had beaten the Progressives. It had been to Dunning that the Liberal party had turned after the S.G.G.A. entered provincial politics in 1922, and his former prominent association with the organized farmers had served him well. It was Dunning, the former Grain Grower leader, who alone could attack the farmers' political movement without appearing to criticize its foster parent, the S.G.G.A. It was not simply fear of schism and a weakening of the farmers' organization which prompted Dunning to act as he did, of course, but also a desire, as a good party man, to keep the Liberal ship afloat in heavy seas. The tactics had worked. Once the S.G.G.A. withdrew from politics, Dunning's appeal to an agrarian electorate made the Liberals, seemingly, unbeatable. With the Progressives no longer a threat, he could now move to re-establish the old link with the Liberals in Ottawa. Beyond that was to lie a post in Mackenzie King's cabinet and a career in federal politics.

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[232] AS, C. A. Dunning Papers, J. F. Johnston to Dunning, 1 May 1925, pp. 49571-72.

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[233] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, R. M. Johnson to Crerar, 7 October 1922.

CHAPTER IX

THE LULL BEFORE THE STORM, 1925-1928

Saskatchewan Liberals had good reason for confidence as they surveyed the political horizon on the morrow of their impressive victory at the polls on 2 June. A Liberal government had ruled the province now for two decades, and seemed to be growing more invincible the longer it remained in office. The Progressives, who had formed the main opposition during the first half of the 1920's, were clearly in a state of decline. As for the Conservatives, who were again showing new signs of life under J. T. M. Anderson but had only garnered three seats in the Legislature, they could scarcely yet be considered a serious challenge to Liberal hegemony at Regina. The next three years gave no hint of any perceptible change in the relative strength and popularity of the three parties. Better crops and higher prices brought renewed prosperity to Saskatchewan, and the general feeling of optimism so apparent in the province after 1925 appeared to ensure a contented electorate. Proof of this could be found in the results of the eleven by-elections held between June 1925 and December 1927, all but one of which were favourable to the government.[1] Indeed the only real threat the Liberals faced during these years came from within, from a growing feud between C. A. Dunning, after 1926 a minister in the federal cabinet, and his former chief lieutenant and successor as Premier, J. G. Gardiner.

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[1] *Legislative Directory*, p. 48.

Dunning's success in provincial politics had early marked him as a bright prospect for the larger stage at Ottawa. He was young, ambitious and capable, all attractive attributes.[2] More important, he was sympathetic to the demands of western farmers, and Liberals were quick to see that his presence in the federal cabinet might enhance the prestige and perhaps revive the political fortunes of the King government on the prairies.[3] King first approached the Saskatchewan Premier with an offer of a cabinet portfolio early in 1924, when Dunning and T. A. Crerar were both invited to Ottawa for discussions with the Prime Minister. Mackenzie King was very much impressed with Dunning, confiding in his diary that he found the Saskatchewan Premier "... a stronger saner and sounder man than Crerar." Dunning admitted that he would like to go into federal politics, but thought he could do more good by remaining in Saskatchewan.[4] Again, during his tour of western Canada in the autumn of 1924, King suggested to Dunning that he join the federal government. Dunning expressed an interest, particularly in the portfolio of Railways and Canals, but cautiously refrained from committing himself in public.[5]

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[2] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 13 January 1923; same to same, 3 February 1925.

[3] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, W. E. Knowles to King, 4 January 1924, pp. 86495-97.

[4] *King Diaries*, 10 January 1924.

Fresh from his triumph in the provincial elections, the Saskatchewan Premier met with Mackenzie King a third time, in Ottawa, on 10 August 1925. The portfolio of Railways and Canals was again offered. Dunning at first seemed pleased with the proposal, but a few days later he again began to waver.[6] Not until he had returned to Regina and consulted with his cabinet colleagues did Dunning give a definite answer:

> The unanimous feeling is that I could wield a great influence Federally, without impairing the solidarity of the Provincial party, by remaining here at the present time. The strong belief also exists that matters will probably develop in such a way as to leave me as Premier of Saskatchewan in a position to be a strong influence towards the unification of Liberalism, after the Federal election is over, especially if the results made it necessary for elected Members of Liberal mind to stand together or, in the alternative, allow a Conservative minority to rule.[7]

Why had Dunning changed his mind? King apparently felt that Dunning wished to play it safe: if the Liberals did win the impending general election he could still enter the cabinet, but if they lost he would still be Premier of Saskatchewan.[8] In fact Dunning did have serious reservations about Liberal chances on the prairies, believing that without some reconciliation between Liberals and Progressives a large number of Conservatives would be returned in three-cornered contests.[9] Dunning may also have calculated that if the Liberals again fared badly at the polls Mackenzie King's continued leadership of the party might be in jeopardy. In that case, Dunning would be ready and waiting in the wings.

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[5] *Ibid.*, 3 November 1924. This was, of course, the same occasion on which Dunning had taken pains not even to appear on the same public platform with the federal leader. (*Supra*, p. 602.)

[6] *Ibid.*, 10-11 August 1925, 14 August 1925.

[7] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 22 August 1925, p. 97169.

[8] *King Diaries*, 14 August 1925, 23 October 1925. Dafoe too thought that "Dunning is undoubtedly keen to go to Ottawa but he is

His misgivings about the Liberal's prospects notwithstanding, Dunning had promised to lend his active assistance once the writs were issued.[10] He was at King's side at the Prime Minister's three Saskatchewan meetings, and also spoke in Winnipeg and Toronto during the campaign. Everywhere Dunning stressed the need for Liberals and Progressives to co-operate to prevent the election of a large number of high tariff Conservatives. For his part King promised, from platforms shared by Dunning, that he would ask the Saskatchewan Premier to enter the cabinet if the government was returned.[11] King doubtless hoped to put pressure on Dunning to accept, and it is clear from King's diary that he believed Dunning

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not prepared to take too many chances ...." (PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to J. A. Stevenson, 28 January 1924.)

[9] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 30 June 1925; A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 11 August 1925.

[10] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 22 August 1925, p. 97171.

[11] *Leader*, 30 September 1925, 1 October 1925, 8 October 1925, 10 October 1925, 24 October 1925.

had agreed to the move.[12]

Saskatchewan Liberals also assisted in the campaign in a more practical way. The federal and provincial party organizations, separated since the war, had been reunited earlier in the year,[13] and Dunning threw the full force of his Saskatchewan "machine" behind Liberal candidates in the province.[14] The assistance provided by Premier Dunning and the provincial Liberal organization, coupled with the appeal of King's promise to complete the Hudson Bay Railway, had the desired result. Redistribution had increased the number of federal ridings in Saskatchewan from sixteen to twenty-one; of these fifteen went to the Liberals and the remainder to the Progressives.[15]

It was, as King put it, a "splendid result,"[16] but the Liberals had not been so fortunate in other parts of Canada. Overall the party's strength in Parliament slipped from 116 to 101, with the Prime Minister and eight of his cabinet colleagues among the fallen. At the same time the Conservatives more than doubled their representation, from 49 at the dissolution to 116, and emerged from the election as the largest party in the House of Commons.[17] While Mackenzie King assessed the damage and looked for some means of keeping the Liberals in power, there were others within the party who began seriously to consider replacing him as leader. To them, Dunning seemed the logical successor. He was a politician with a winning reputation, a distinction which Mackenzie King could hardly claim. With Dunning as leader these disgruntled Liberals believed the party could win back the support it had lost in English Canada, especially in the west, and with virtually solid support from Quebec assured again become the dominant party in the country.[18]

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[12] *King Diaries*, 29 September 1925.

[13] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to W. R. Motherwell, 9 February 1925, pp. 2504-505.

[14] PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 14 October 1925; AS, N. H. McTaggart Papers, McTaggart to R. Forke, 3 November 1925; McTaggart to J. Morrison, 19 November 1925.

[15] *Directory of Federal Elections*, p. 11.

[16] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, King to C. A. Dunning, 29 October 1925, p. 97186.

The Saskatchewan Premier himself took no active part in the "plot" to unseat King.[19] Shortly after the election Dunning had apparently made up his mind to accept King's offer of a cabinet portfolio, and informed the Prime Minister that he would enter the government when he was called.[20] It would have been awkward, not to say embarrassing, for him to have done so and at the same time be seeking to propel himself into the federal Liberal leadership at King's expense. Political usurper or not, Charles Dunning was the key to King's plans. He envisaged Dunning becoming the leader of a western Liberal *bloc* within the federal party, much as Ernest Lapointe served as King's chief lieutenant in Quebec.[21] Andrew Haydon went west in mid-November to convey King's views to the Saskatchewan Premier. The plan was outlined to Dunning and he gave his approval. He would come to Ottawa after the Legislature had prorogued, in late January, and would take the portfolio of Railways and Canals because he felt he lacked the federal experience necessary for Finance.[22]

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[17] H. B. Neatby, *William Lyon Mackenzie King: The Lonely Heights, 1924-1932* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1963), pp. 74-75.

[18] *Ibid.*, pp. 86-88.

[19] There can hardly be any disagreement with Neatby's remark about the episode that it "... scarcely merited the dignity of being called a 'plot'." (*Ibid.*, p. 88.) A fuller account may be found in S. P. Regenstreif, "A Threat to Leadership: C. A. Dunning and Mackenzie King," *Dalhousie Review*, Vol. XLIV, No. 3 (Autumn, 1964), pp. 272-89.

[20] *King Diaries*, 4 November 1925.

Dunning was not the only Saskatchewan Liberal being considered as a possible addition to the federal cabinet. J. G. Gardiner was the other, his name having first been suggested by W. R. Motherwell in August 1925.[23] King was attracted to the idea, but Dunning had refused to part with his Minister of Highways before the federal election.[24] King tried again, in November, when he despatched Andrew Haydon to Regina to finalize the arrangements that would bring Dunning to Ottawa. Haydon found Gardiner "ready to come ...

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[21] Neatby, *W. L. M. King*, pp. 92-93.

[22] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, A. Haydon to King, 23 November 1925, pp. 98531-32.

[23] *King Diaries*, 21 August 1925.

[24] *Ibid.*, 22 August 1925, 28 August 1925.

also,"[25] but the Saskatchewan Premier still showed little enthusiasm for the idea. "I rather guess," Haydon reported to King, "that D[unning] would like to keep G[ardiner] somehow attached to himself but G[ardiner] had won a few more spurs and I think declines the leading strings."[26]

It was perhaps inevitable that such an intense and sometimes bitter rivalry should have developed between Dunning and Gardiner. There are only a few oblique references to the feud in their personal correspondence, and the reasons underlying it and the extent to which it weakened the Liberal party must remain largely a matter of conjecture. One thing seems clear, though: as King's official biographer and others have noted, the two might be friendly but they were certainly not friends.[27] Dunning had received most of the credit for the Liberals' success in Saskatchewan, and by all accounts he was not one to share the limelight. His government was, in the opinion of one well-known Regina lawyer,

> ... purely a one-man Government. Nobody counts in it but Dunning and privately I may say I do not think anybody will be allowed to count in it but Dunning as long as he is there.[28]

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[25] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, A. Haydon to L. C. Moyer, 19 November 1925, p. 98525.

[26] *Ibid.*, A. Haydon to King, 23 November 1925, p. 98535.

[27] Neatby, *W. L. M. King*, p. 94; PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 9 June 1926.

[28] QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, C. E. Gregory to Crerar, 13 September 1922.

King had formed a similar impression of the Saskatchewan Premier during the recent federal campaign. "He is a difficult sort of person to work with," King had noted, "being so self-centred, vain and self conscious ... Should be most helpful and efficient in a Govt. but inclined to boss the shew [*sic*]."[29] This Gardiner naturally resented for, as Haydon was quick to see, he too was ambitious:

> This [Gardiner] is the field man. A University training, brilliant student and most effective in the practical field. Somewhat of a Puritan and outside of elections has kept all the Commandments from his youth up. Genial enough in his own way, but somewhat narrowly sincere. He could hardly ever be a popular figure or be a kind of hail fellow, which in a considerable measure Dunning is. G. would like to go to Ottawa, but prefers Saskatchewan and yet if he were in the Federal field bossing the organization of the three Provinces he would be happy. He talked to me privately. He things D. is pretty ambitious - that he seeks to be Premier - that it is wrong to ask him to be the only thing on the Prairies - not that G. will not follow him, but that if other Ministers are to come to Ottawa they come not because D. says so but because the Premier calls them.[30]

Other differences in background and personality also contributed to the growing rift between the two Saskatchewan Liberals. Dunning owed his success in provincial politics to his popular appeal among the farmers. While he did not underestimate the necessity of a good organization, he could not appreciate Gardiner's concentration on this aspect of politics. "Too often," Dunning wrote after he had left Regina,

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[29] *King Diaries*, 30 September 1925.

[30] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, A. Haydon to King, 23 November 1925, p. 98535.

> when a Party gets an organization perfected they regard it as a "machine" for winning elections and overlook the fact that an organization can only be effective so long as it has public opinion behind it. Elections cannot be won without organization but machine organization is to my mind very dangerous .... You may win an election or two by this method but it is no good in the long run.[31]

Gardiner's control of the party organization had given him a strong base, from which, as will be seen, he was able to secure the premiership in 1926. At the same time it had fostered a certain parochialism which deprived him of the breadth of vision necessary to comprehend another's views, and further sharpened the rivalry with Dunning.[32]

It was a delicate situation, and King took the utmost care in wooing the Saskatchewan Minister of Highways. He wrote directly to Gardiner early in December, declaring that he was "... looking forward, as you know, to seeing you enter the larger sphere of politics and to your co-operation in the work of organization of adjoining provinces as well as your own" and that he would "... welcome word both from Mr. Dunning and yourself" as to how and when this might be arranged.[33] Gardiner was equally circumspect, but promised to give these overtures most careful consideration.[34] It was arranged that Gardiner would come to Ottawa to discuss the matter further, but only after King had informed Dunning of these developments.[35] While he expressed some misgivings to the Prime Minister about Dunning's ambitions, Gardiner did agree while in Ottawa to join the federal government.[36] The matter seemed settled, though Dunning still preferred to come alone.[37]

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[31] QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to W. A. Matheson, 1 October 1926.

[32] Unger, p. 62.

[33] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, King to J. G. Gardiner, 3 December 1925, pp. 97661-63.

[34] *Ibid.*, J. G. Gardiner to King, 8 December 1925, pp. 97664-65.

Not long after Gardiner returned to Saskatchewan he began to receive intimations that matters were not nearly as settled as he had thought. On 29 January 1926 W. R. Motherwell wired from Ottawa that there was "... considerable anxiety here among both western and eastern friends regarding probable effect upon federal progressives of you and premier both coming into King cabinet just now."[38] The Minister of Highways was incensed. He replied to Motherwell that "if our organization defeating all but four [Progressives] places them in position to select cabinet I never want to be in it or assist in its return."[39] Gardiner elaborated his views a few days later:

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[35] *Ibid.*, King to J. G. Gardiner, 19 December 1925, p. 97667; King to C. A. Dunning, 19 December 1925, pp. 97223-24.

[36] *King Diaries*, 28 December 1925. King's account of this interview gives no details, but apparently Gardiner was to come to Ottawa as Minister of Immigration after Dunning had joined the government.

[37] *Ibid.*, 2 January 1926.

[38] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, W. R. Motherwell to Gardiner, 29 January 1926, p. 2636.

[39] *Ibid.*, Gardiner to W. R. Motherwell, 3 February 1926, p. 2638.

> Our organization in this province defeated all but four of the Progressive candidates who opposed us, and I would judge from the attitude of our supporters down there that the wishes of these four men has considerable to do with the re-organization of the Liberal party ...
>
> It may be looked upon as desirable at Ottawa to please for the time being the few Progressives who are there, but I am convinced ... that there are no Progressives left in Saskatchewan, and the sooner the four men down there are brought to see that the only hope they have for a political future is to bring themselves into line with the views of electors in Saskatchewan, the better it will be for them, and any Liberals who undertake to carry on further at Ottawa by making terms with all and sundry will find it very difficult to secure re-election in this province ....[40]

Mackenzie King certainly wanted Gardiner in Ottawa. All along he had been impressed with Gardiner's organizing abilities, the more so after he had witnessed at first hand the efficiency with which the Minister of Highways managed the by-election in Prince Albert which enabled King to resume his seat in Parliament.[41] There were lengthy discussions on the subject while King was in Saskatchewan in January,[42] but it was not to be. After the Prime Minister had returned to Ottawa he wired Gardiner, informing him that it would be unwise "at the present time" for both Saskatchewan men to come even if, as had been arranged, Gardiner was to take Motherwell's place in the cabinet.[43] King was still hopeful that suitable arrangements might be worked out after the parliamentary session was over, but Gardiner was not so optimistic. He wrote to King on 19 February:

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[40] *Ibid.*, same to same, 15 February 1926, p. 2640-41.

[41] *Ibid.*, W. L. M. King to Gardiner, 5 February 1926, pp. 2251-52. "With an organization approaching this in other provinces," King confided in his diary, "we could sweep the country." (*King Diaries*, 3 February 1926.)

[42] *King Diaries*, 31 January 1926.

> I understand that Mr. Dunning is going east immediately adjournment is announced. That, of course, will necessitate action here. I am not in a position to state what that action will be, but sufficient has already occured to assure me that the truth of my expressed fear will be made apparent to you before six months have passed by. Everything which has taken place to date has been to the end that should I be compelled to take charge here, I might be compelled to remain indefinitely.[44]

Next day Charles Dunning resigned as Premier to enter the federal government. He was sworn in as Minister of Railways and Canals on 1 March 1926. A seat was opened for him in Regina, where he was elected by acclamation.[45] Gardiner did not go to Ottawa. His talents would have been an invaluable asset to the disorganized federal Liberals, but he did not have Dunning's appeal among western farmers. King needed the support of those farmers, and their political representatives in Parliament, if he hoped to remain in power. He had wanted both men, but it was Dunning who was the key to King's plans in 1926.

With Dunning gone Saskatchewan Liberals turned, for the fourth time since 1905, to the task of choosing a leader and Premier.

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[43] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, King to C. A. Dunning, 6 February 1926, p. 111150.

[44] *Ibid.*, J. G. Gardiner to King, 19 February 1926, p. 111761.

[45] *Leader*, 22 February 1926, 2 March 1926, 17 March 1926.

The question of a successor had already been much discussed among the inner circle at Regina.[46] As King discovered during his stay in Saskatchewan in January, it too was complicated by that "unfortunate bitterness and cleavage" between the Premier and the Minister of Highways. "Dunning is agreeable to G. going to Ottawa," King noted in his diary on 31 January,

> but w[oul]d prefer to have G. remain at present, come later, with Hamilton, Prov'l Premier meanwhile. Gardiner is determined if he does not go to Ottawa to be Premier .... The cabinet is divided.

The day's conversations had "... left the matter pretty much in favour of Dunning's coming at once ... and Gardiner remaining and claiming the leadership provincially."[47] In fact, though, there were others who aspired to the premiership, and the question of a successor to Dunning was not to be so easily resolved.

In the inevitable newspaper speculation that preceded the selection of the new Liberal leader, three other men, all members of Dunning's cabinet, were touted as possibilities. Two, A. P. McNab and S. J. Latta, were only token candidates and seem to have enjoyed little support outside their respective constituencies.[48] The other, C. M. Hamilton, cannot be dismissed so readily. He had held office under both Martin and Dunning, and was considered a capable administrator and popular among the rank and file in the country.[49] These were considerable assets, but Hamilton was not the politician that Gardiner was, and this may have counted against him when the M.L.A.'s and defeated candidates met in caucus on 25 February to choose a successor to Dunning. They picked J. G. Gardiner, and their choice was endorsed that evening by a convention attended by some 1200 party supporters in Regina.[50] According to at least one knowledgeable observer, the caucus had been influenced in favour of Gardiner by his work as head of the party "machine," and especially by the capable way in which he had organized the 1925 provincial election campaign.[51]

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[46] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 30 November 1925, p. 97214.

[47] *King Diaries*, 31 January 1926.

[48] *Leader*, 24-25 February 1926.

The transfer of leadership was accomplished without any outward signs of discontent, though Dunning's role in the whole affair continued to be a matter for speculation long after he had left for Ottawa. Some observers felt that Dunning had actively supported C. M. Hamilton's candidacy in opposition to Gardiner,[52] while others were of the opinion that, notwithstanding his well-known preference for Hamilton, Dunning had taken no active part in the proceedings at Regina on 25 February.[53] Whether Dunning had interfered or not, Gardiner was certainly aware of his rival's ambition and of the need to protect his own position. This may well explain why Gardiner kept control over party organization in his own hands after he assumed the premiership when his three predecessors had entrusted the work to others.[54]

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[49] QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, T. E. Gamble to Dunning, 8 February 1926; J. E. Paynter to Dunning, 22 February 1926; PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 27 February 1926.

[50] *Leader*, 26 February 1926; PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 5 March 1926, pp. 111770-71.

[51] PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 27 February 1926.

[52] *Western Producer*, 21 October 1926.

The new administration which took office under Gardiner on 26 February was virtually unchanged from its predecessor in terms of membership. McNab, Latta, J. A. Cross and J. M. Uhrich kept the same portfolios they had held before Gardiner's elevation to the premiership. Hamilton remained Minister of Agriculture but gave up Municipal Affairs. Gardiner kept Highways, and added Railways to his responsibilities. He also brought in two new men, the first native sons to hold office in a Saskatchewan cabinet. W. J. Patterson, who had represented Pipestone since 1921, became Provincial Treasurer and Minister of Telephones. Although one of the government's few remaining newspaper critics in the province was moved to remark of the new minister that "little can yet be said about Patterson, since he has not spoken a great deal in his five years in the Legislature,"[55] he did bring a wealth of business and government experience to the cabinet. He had worked for a time as a bank manager in Grenfell before joining the provincial civil service as Superintendent of Rural Telephones in 1910. Patterson had resigned in 1915 to enlist in the C.E.F., and entered the insurance business after the war.[56]

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[53] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 26 October 1926.

[54] Smith, p. 185.

[55] *Western Producer*, 4 March 1926.

Municipal Affairs went to T. C. Davis, a Prince Albert lawyer who had served as an alderman and then as mayor of that city prior to his election to the Legislature the previous June. One of his major accomplishments as mayor had been to bring some measure of order to the city's tangled financial affairs. This fact, the *Leader* claimed in commenting on the appointment, had made him "intimately acquainted with municipal problems."[57] As a member of the most prominent Liberal family in Prince Albert Davis also possessed an intimate acquaintance with politics. His father had first been elected to the House of Commons as the member for Prince Albert in 1896 and had represented that riding until his appointment to the Senate in 1904. The family owned the Prince Albert *Herald*, the city's lone newspaper, and ran northern Saskatchewan's Liberal establishment with an iron hand.[58] Patterson and Davis were both thought to have been strong supporters of Gardiner in the contest for the leadership, and their inclusion in the cabinet was interpreted in some quarters as a reward for their loyalty.[59]

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[56] *Leader*, 27 February 1926.

[57] *Ibid.*

[58] J. G. Diefenbaker, *One Canada: Memoirs of the Right Honourable John G. Diefenbaker. The Crusading Years, 1895-1956* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1975), pp. 136-37.

For the first time since 1905, the cabinet contained no prominent representative of either of the province's farm organizations. This marked the end of a tradition which had seen a considerable degree of overlap between the personnel of successive Liberal governments and the S.G.G.A., but it would be a mistake to exaggerate its significance. Given the temper of opinion among the rank and file of both the S.G.G.A. and the Farmers' Union toward multiple office holding by this time, no prominent farm leader could have accepted a cabinet portfolio in the way that Langley, Dunning or Maharg had done in the past. If the new government was to retain the support of rural voters, it would have to do so by other means, though there was no reason to believe that Gardiner and the Liberals were in any great difficulty here. Indeed the prospects seemed entirely favourable, for the continued recovery of Saskatchewan's farm economy could be expected to benefit the government rather than its opponents. There had been a marked improvement in prices and yields in 1925, the outlook for the agricultural machinery business, ever a reliable barometer of the state of the Saskatchewan economy, was said to be better than at any time since 1920 and newspapers were reporting the first signs of a renewed influx of immigrant farmers and farm labourers into the province.[60]

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[59] *Western Producer*, 4 March 1926.

[60] *Agriculture Report*, 1926, pp. 9, 244-47, 262-71; *Leader*, 20 March 1926.

The absence of any prominent farm spokesman in the new Gardiner cabinet went unnoticed even in the pages of the *Western Producer*, which by this time had become as influential a paper among Saskatchewan farmers as the older *Grain Growers' Guide*.[61] The rivalry between the S.G.G.A. and the Farmers' Union, which was shortly to culminate in their amalgamation as the United Farmers of Canada (Saskatchewan Section),[62] and the Wheat Pool's efforts to purchase the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company, which was also to come to fruition in 1926,[63] were of more concern to Saskatchewan farmers and their leaders. Officially, Saskatchewan's farm organizations were politically neutral and would remain so until the next decade, though some farm leaders were admirers of Gardiner and gradually drifted into the Liberal fold.[64]

The new Premier would have nothing to fear from the organized farmers, but a potentially more serious threat -- internal schism --

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[61] The circulation of the *Western Producer* had reached 12,000 in 1924 and 21,000 by 1926. It could not yet match the circulation of the *Grain Growers' Guide*, which in 1926 totalled 73,000 and 40,000 in Saskatchewan alone. (*Western Producer*, 31 December 1924; QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, memorandum "Weekly or Semi-Monthly," 4 January 1926.)

[62] Lipset, pp. 66-67; Spafford, "The 'Left Wing'," p. 48.

[63] The best account of the Pool's acquisition of the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company is to be found in *McPhail Diary*, pp. 67-103.

[64] Courville, pp. 166-67. One notable example was George F. Edwards, the last president of the S.G.G.A. and vice president of the U.F.C. (S.S.) after 1926.

continued to trouble the Liberal party. In the months following Gardiner's elevation to the premiership rumours began to circulate that he was "... carrying on a knifing campaign against Dunning, both at Ottawa and in Regina," with the knowledge and support of Mackenzie King and the Saskatchewan organization.[65] Though Gardiner had initially retained all of the ministers who had served in his predecessor's cabinet, there were subsequent reorganizations which Dunning apparently considered a personal affront.

In October 1926 A. P. McNab, the last remaining member of Saskatchewan's first Liberal regime, resigned to become a member of the Local Government Board.[66] Though the ostensible reason for the change was McNab's advancing age and his wish to retire from politics before another election took place, it was claimed that Dunning regarded it as the beginning of a vendetta against his supporters.[67] McNab's departure necessitated a reshuffling of cabinet responsibilities, since the Premier apparently did not consider adding a new minister at this time. J. M. Uhrich assumed the added burden of Public Works and Gardiner and Patterson exchanged portfolios, with the Premier becoming Provincial Treasurer and Patterson Minister of

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[65] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 26 October 1926; same to same, 16 December 1926; PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 21 December 1926.

[66] *Leader*, 19 October 1926, 23 October 1926.

[67] *Ibid.*, 28 October 1926; PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 26 October 1926.

Highways.[68] The fact that none of the other ministers, including Hamilton, were affected seems to suggest that Dunning's fears may have been exaggerated. The absence of any reference to these cabinet changes in Dunning's own personal correspondence of course makes such a conclusion impossible to document, but if Gardiner really were engaged in a "knifing campaign" against Dunning and his supporters, one of the first to feel its effects ought to have been C. M. Hamilton, the man whom Dunning had favoured as his successor.[69]

To some observers, the departure of James Cross as part of a second and more extensive cabinet reorganization in December 1927 was further evidence of Gardiner's efforts to purge the government of Dunning's supporters.[70] In this instance, though, it would appear that there was a definite difference of opinion between Gardiner and Cross over matters of policy, specifically the government's decision to disband the Saskatchewan Provincial Police and return full responsibility for law enforcement in the province to the R.C.M.P. Cross did not agree with the decision, nor would he agree to take a different portfolio, deciding instead "... to withdraw from the gov't and go back to his own [law] practice, if nothing else offers."[71] For a time Gardiner was apparently seeking to find a judgeship for Cross,[72] but nothing had come of these efforts by the time the Attorney-General's resignation was made public. Cross was succeeded by T. C. Davis, George Spence was plucked from the back benches at Ottawa to become Minister of Railways and Minister of Highways and there were other changes involving Patterson, Latta and the Premier himself.[73] Again Hamilton, the man most closely associated with Dunning, remained untouched.

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[68] *Leader*, 23 October 1926, 28 October 1926.

[69] Smith, p. 186.

[70] *Western Producer*, 15 December 1927.

[71] QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, J. G. Gardiner to Dunning, 19 November 1927; Unger, p. 60.

Evidence of a vendetta or purge is difficult to find, but it is clear that there were a number of irritants which troubled relations between Dunning and Gardiner after 1926. One arose out of their differing attitudes toward a syndicate of Regina businessmen headed by George M. Bell. Bell and his associates had extensive newspaper interests in the province, including the four Regina and Saskatoon dailies, and Bell's insurance firm enjoyed a monopoly of the government's business.[74] Bell was apparently not above using his newspapers to further his business interests and attempted to make deals with the government at Regina.[75] In 1922, shortly after his appointment to the Highways portfolio, Gardiner had been approached by this syndicate with the request that their company be guaranteed a sizeable percentage of culvert sales to the Department. The transaction was similar to others in which Bell and his cronies had been acting as brokers for companies doing business with the government. While Gardiner had no scruples about using patronage for political purposes, he was, as Senator Haydon had remarked to Mackenzie King, "something of a Puritan" and expected the same degree of personal rectitude from others that he practiced himself. Gardiner had bluntly rejected Bell's suggestion, thereby sowing the seeds of a lengthy feud between the two men.[76] Gardiner believed that in retaliation Bell had sought to influence party members to choose Hamilton as Dunning's successor in 1926, though not at Hamilton's instigation.[77]

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[72] QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, J. G. Gardiner to Dunning, 19 November 1927; J. A. Cross to Dunning, 26 November 1927.

[73] *Leader*, 9 November 1927, 9 December 1927. Patterson again became Provincial Treasurer, Gardiner took over Education from S. J. Latta and Latta took over Municipal Affairs from T. C. Davis.

[74] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. H. Leech to Meighen, 4 March 1926, pp. 75866-67.

[75] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to H. Sifton, 26 May 1926.

At the same time Bell was also involved in a struggle with the Meilicke family of Saskatoon for control of the *Leader* group of newspapers. It culminated in a reshuffling of the board of directors in April 1926 which saw Bell removed from the board by the majority shareholders, the Meilicke brothers and Burford Hooke.[78] The latter were known to be close friends of the new Premier, and there were some who suspected that "it was Gardiner who induced the Mellickes [*sic*] to break with Bell and put him out of control of these newspapers."[79] In turn Bell attempted to buy out the Meilickes with the assistance of a group of Conservative businessmen in Regina.[80] He eventually failed in these efforts, sold his share of the newspapers to Hooke and the Meilickes, and moved his newspaper interests to Alberta, where he acquired control of the Calgary *Albertan*.[81]

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[76] *Leader*, 23 October 1928. Gardiner made a public statement outlining the origins of the feud with Bell during the Arm River by-election in October 1928. Bell subsequently issued a denial of Gardiner's accusations (*Western Producer*, 1 November 1928), but the evidence, fragmentary though it might be, seems to favour the Premier. This is not to suggest that Gardiner was blameless, for Dunning was later to remark of the feud that it was "... a case of an irresistible force versus an immovable mass." As for himself, Dunning admitted that "I cannot see completely eye to eye with either the irresistible force or the immovable mass ...." (QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, Dunning to G. M. Bell, 13 September 1929.)

[77] *Leader*, 23 October 1928; Unger, pp. 82-83.

Distance did not lessen the hostility between Bell and Gardiner. In 1927 the Premier confidentially informed Senator Andrew Haydon that "we consider ... Bell and Stan Ross the most bitter opponents that this Government has ... men, who, if they were friends of ours, would do the Liberal Party more harm than any opposition which is in sight."[82] For his part Bell was privately letting it be known by 1928 that "there were doings in the Gov't Liquor Administration and Highways Admin. in Sask., that, if exposed, would create a scandal of good sized dimensions ...."[83] Bell's newspapers continued to feature articles on the supposed feud between the Premier and the federal Minister of Railways, articles which Gardiner may well have suspected were inspired by Dunning, since he and Bell continued to be good friends.[84]

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[78] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, W. D. Cowan to Meighen, 16 April 1926, p. 69027. There are no figures for the percentage of shares held by each of the major shareholders in the Leader Publishing Company and its sister company which controlled the Saskatoon *Star* and *Phoenix* for the year 1926, but in 1923 the major shareholders in the Leader Publishing Company were the Meilicke family of Saskatoon, with 34 per cent; G. M. Bell of Regina, 26 per cent; S. L. Ross of Regina, 19 per cent and Burford Hooke of Regina, 19 per cent. (*Leader*, 22 September 1923.)

[79] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to C. Sifton, 26 October 1926.

[80] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, F. Somerville to Meighen, 10 July 1926, pp. 87435-37.

[81] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, C. Sifton to Dafoe, 4 November 1926.

The other major difference between Gardiner and Dunning concerned the question of how to treat the Progressives, and this too led to friction after 1926. Dunning had adopted a rather flexible attitude while he had been leader of the Saskatchewan Liberals. He had criticized the farmers for entering politics and had not been afraid to meet them head on in a provincial election, of course, but he had also been prepared to seek an accommodation with the federal Progressives in order to avoid division among what Liberals so often referred to as the "low tariff forces." Gardiner's view was quite different. There was only one attitude to take toward the Progressives, he had written to Mackenzie King in 1924,

> and that is to recognize in them the real opposition to your

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[82] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to A. Haydon, 24 June 1927, p. 7431.

[83] PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 8 February 1928.

[84] QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, J. G. Gardiner to Dunning, 21 February 1927.

> Government. If I had to make a choice tomorrow between voting and working for Progressive or Conservative candidates, I would have no hesitation in saying I would support the Conservative. We are in a position here now to clear the Progressive movement from this province and elect Liberals in practically every seat ....[85]

When the provincial Liberals threw their full support behind the King government in the 1925 federal election Gardiner was able to put his theories into practice. The sweeping Liberal victory in Saskatchewan doubtless enhanced Gardiner's reputation as a skilful political organizer, but it also made him more than ever the *bête noire* of the Progressives.[86]

In the wake of the Progressives' twin electoral disasters of 2 June and 29 October 1925 there were angry outbursts against the Liberals and whisperings of a new alliance with the Conservatives. As one disgruntled Progressive supporter put it:

> I have come to the conclusion that our real enemies ... are not the conservatives but the Liberals and I am going to do my best to see if we can induce the progressives to stand apart when the house meets and let the liberals go down to defeat. I have it from some of the most influential conservatives in Saskatchewan that if the progressives stand apart at this time they will not run conservative candidates at the next election in country constituencies. I would expect they in that event would expect us not to run progressives in the cities.[87]

These were only murmurings. The great majority of the Progressives in Saskatchewan were still determined to preserve their existence independent of the two old parties. To this end, it was decided at a conference in Regina early in December to reorganize the Progressive party by merging the federal organization with its provincial counterpart. Those in attendance were unanimously of the opinion "that conditions in the province were such as to justify the demand that the federal Progressive organization should give active support to a provincial organization advocating Progressive principles." Those "conditions" were, of course, the open hostility of the provincial Liberal government which "... in the recent federal election ... threw in the weight of the provincial Liberal machine to defeat the Progressives at any price." At the same time it was agreed to hold a "Monster Progressive Rally" early in the new year to lay plans for an intensive organization campaign covering the entire province.[88]

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[85] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 15 November 1924, p. 84872.

[86] PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 26 January 1926.

[87] AS, N. H. McTaggart Papers, D. A. Leckie to McTaggart, 11 November 1925.

Some Progressives apparently doubted the wisdom of uniting the federal and provincial parties,[89] but when the convention met in January 1926 it decided to enter the provincial political field.[90] In seeking to revive the fortunes of Saskatchewan Progressivism its supporters had violated one of the basic principles that had underlain the farmers' political movement since 1919, and the *Western*

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[88] *Western Producer*, 10 December 1925.

[89] AS, N. H. McTaggart Papers, McTaggart to E. N. Hopkins, 30 December 1925; McTaggart to L. J. Harvey, 30 December 1925.

[90] *Western Producer*, 7 January 1926, 14 January 1926.

Producer, for one, was quick to note the change:

> The step marks a departure from the original program of the Progressive Party, which announced as one of its principles the complete separation of Dominion and Provincial politics .... Under the circumstances, they decided that it was not reasonable to move in the Federal fields and sleep in the Provincial field ... If the Progressive movement has a future, the present development may be of considerable importance, but its true significance and effect will not become apparent until a general election gives the political parties another opportunity to show their strength.[91]

"Jimmy" Gardiner had never been one to back down when challenged, even during his college days in Winnipeg,[92] and in his first address as leader of the Liberal party he made a point of answering the Progressives. The prosperity of Saskatchewan did not depend solely upon what was decided in the local legislature, he told party supporters, but upon federal policies too, "... and I have always been a believer in the principle that any man who is the leader of any party of the Dominion who stands for the policies of his party should not be ashamed to go on any platform open to him to expound those principles at any time in the interests of his province."[93] At another Liberal rally in Moose Jaw a few weeks later the Premier made the point again:

> There is no such thing in this province as a provincial and federal Liberal party. We stand for the same principles federally and provincially ....[94]

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[91] *Ibid.*, 14 January 1926.

[92] *Leader*, 26 February 1926.

[93] *Ibid.*

[94] *Ibid.*, 13 March 1926.

The message was clear. Federal and provincial politics were indivisible, the old comfortable relationship which had existed between Regina and Ottawa Liberals before 1917 was to be revived and the Progressives were, by implication, to be fought at every turn. Gardiner's inflexibility toward the Progressives was to prove a major handicap in later years, but his pugnacious attitude seemed justified by the results of the first contests between his government and the new combined farmers' political organization.

On 18 March the two new ministers, Patterson and Davis, were returned without opposition in the customary by-elections. In April a Liberal was elected over another Liberal in the far northern riding of Ile à la Crosse, where the sitting member had died, and in May yet another Liberal was elected by acclamation in Moose Jaw County, Dunning's old seat.[95] In Notukeu, where a by-election was called for 1 June 1926 to fill a vacancy caused by the election of the sitting member to the House of Commons, the Liberal was opposed, not by a Progressive, but by an Independent.[96] The campaign was a quiet one, and the Liberal was elected by a very comfortable majority.[97]

The first real test of strength between Gardiner and the reorganized Progressives came during the federal election campaign later that summer. Gardiner, who was called east to help plan Liberal strategy, wished to fight the Progressives "one and all" and was supported by another as partisan as he, W. R. Motherwell. Others, including Dunning and King, disagreed, believing that Liberals and Progressives "... sh[ou]ld keep together on constit'l issue, & not permit the Customs matter to come to the fore as it w[ou]ld if they as well as tories began fighting us."[98] Co-operation was made more difficult in Saskatchewan by Progressive suspicions of Gardiner's uncompromising attitude, but eventually three-cornered contests were avoided in more than half the constituencies in Saskatchewan.[99] While Gardiner publicly stressed the need for unity among the low tariff forces in Saskatchewan, in fact he concentrated on trying to defeat the three Progressives -- M. N. Campbell, W. R. Fansher and A. M. Carmichael -- who had supported Meighen during the recent parliamentary session.[100] Again as in 1925 the federal and provincial Liberal organizations worked as one, and this time there was a near total Liberal sweep in Saskatchewan. Sixteen Liberals, and one Liberal-Progressive, were elected as against only four Progressives.[101] The farmers had had no electoral organization and no time to improvise one, and in the frustration of yet another defeat at the hands of the "machine" came the now familiar protests about the impropriety of government employees being used as Liberal campaign workers at the taxpayers' expense.[102]

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[95] *Legislative Directory*, p. 107, 122, 129.

[96] *Leader*, 17 May 1926, 24 May 1926.

[97] *Legislative Directory*, p. 126; *Leader*, 3 June 1926; *Western Producer*, 10 June 1926.

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[98] *King Diaries*, 5 July 1926.

[99] Neatby, *W. L. M. King*, pp. 163-64.

[100] *Leader*, 19 August 1926; *Western Producer*, 26 August 1926; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to W. L. M. King, 31 August 1926, pp. 8059-61.

[101] *Directory of Federal Elections*, p. 12.

Memories of that crushing defeat were still fresh a month later when the Saskatchewan Progressive Association chose a candidate to contest a provincial by-election in Kerrobert. It was easily the liveliest by-election campaign Saskatchewan had seen since the Milestone contest in 1923, and the activities of provincial cabinet ministers, road foremen, managers of liquor stores and other government employees during the recent federal election were given a prominent place in Progressive speeches.[103] Gardiner replied by pointing out that the Progressives were equally guilty of mixing federal and provincial politics, and the presence of the four Saskatchewan Progressive M.P.'s in the riding during the campaign was proof of his assertions.[104]

The Kerrobert contest also marked the first public manifestation of a reorientation in Progressive political philosophy in Saskatchewan. Farmers in the province had never shown much interest in the theories of group government propounded by Henry Wise Wood of Alberta. Now, if Progressive utterances during a by-election campaign can be taken as a reliable indication of party thinking, group government was becoming the ideal and Alberta the example to be imitated.[105] William Irvine, a U.F.A. member of the Alberta legislature and an able exponent of Wood's theories, addressed several meetings during the campaign and apparently challenged Premier Gardiner to debate the group system versus the party system of government.[106] Gardiner did not take up the challenge, but did attack the theory of group government at his meetings, and on one occasion warned voters that the Progressives had "brought into this riding ... men from outside this province to fight your provincial government ... who have never associated with the affairs of your province."[107] The by-election resulted in a victory for the government candidate, though his majority was smaller than any Liberal had polled in the riding since 1917.[108] The outcome naturally pleased the Premier, who professed to see in it a vindication of his stand that provincial cabinet ministers had a right and indeed a duty to take part in federal elections, and that the economic group idea was, as he put it, "too narrow to be used as a foundation upon which to construct a government."[109]

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[102] *Western Producer*, 11 November 1926.

[103] *Leader*, 22 October 1926; *Western Producer*, 28 October 1926.

[104] *Leader*, 4-5 November 1926, 10 November 1026.

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[105] *Western Producer*, 28 October 1926; *Leader*, 5 November 1926.

[106] *Western Producer*, 28 October 1926, 14 July 1927; QUA, T. A. Crerar Papers, Crerar to C. A. Dunning, 6 November 1926.

[107] *Leader*, 5 November 1926.

[108] *Legislative Directory*, p. 109.

[109] *Leader*, 1 February 1927.

The Progressives, meanwhile, were laying plans for a provincial convention in July in yet another effort to place the party on a stronger footing.[110] Notwithstanding the recent reverses suffered by the farmers' political movement in Saskatchewan, there was an air of optimism in Progressive ranks. "You will note," the president of the Saskatchewan Progressive Association commented early in February,

> that Premier Gardiner in his recent address, realizes that the next Provincial election will be fought on the issue of Group Government vs. The Party System and has thrown down the challenge to us. His address shows his uneasiness of the possibilities, if our Convention next July, is as successful as we hope it to be.[111]

That optimism must have dimmed somewhat by mid-February, when two of the Progressive M.L.A.'s, George Cockburn and Charles Agar, the latter party whip, crossed the floor of the House to sit as Liberals. They gave as the reason for their action admiration of Premier Gardiner's record in giving the province "sane and economical government." Cockburn added that he believed the Progressives were no longer a united party and had outlived their usefulness.[112] Dr. C. E. Tran, House leader of the Progressives, accused his two former colleagues of betraying Progressive principles and of "opportunism," and demanded that they resign their seats.[113] Others praised the decision, among them Sydney Bingham, a one time Progressive M.L.A., who wrote to Cockburn:

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[110] *Western Producer,* 27 January 1927.

[111] AS, N. H. McTaggart Papers, C. E. Little to McTaggart, 3 February 1927.

[112] *Leader,* 18 February 1927.

> Just a line to express my approval and congratulations on your recent move across the House.
>
> I have been expecting and hoping that both you and Charlie [Agar] would do this very thing. Whatley and Salkeld should follow.
>
> There is nothing except the one principle of the party system of government and in my opinion that is preferable to the Wood theory of economic class group; and I don't care who knows my opinion on this.[114]

Amid such signs of internal disintegration preparations for the July convention went on, with Premier J. E. Brownlee of Alberta, Agnes McPhail, J. S. Woodsworth and William Irvine among the invited guests. An invitation was also extended to Premier Bracken of Manitoba, but a provincial election in June prevented him from attending.[115] In fact, the convention proved to be a dismal failure. Preparations had been made to accommodate as many as 5,000 delegates in Regina, but attendance fell far short of expectations. There were only 65 delegates present at the opening session, and 250 at the largest gathering.[116]

The chief decision reached during the three-day affair according to one observer, was "... that there was a place for the Progressive movement and that, until something arose to take its place, it would be a surrender to the old parties to abandon activity." The *Western Producer* commented further:

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[113] *Ibid.*, 22 February 1927.

[114] *Western Producer*, 24 February 1927.

[115] *Ibid.*, 28 April 1927, 30 June 1927.

[116] *Leader*, 7-9 July 1927.

> The interesting feature of the proceedings was the evident prevailing impression that it was extremely doubtful if the present Progressive organization could hope to make a serious impression in a general election, and that the continuance in existance of the movement was a temporary method of keeping the spirit of the movement alive until some other organization was ready to carry on the work and produce results.[117]

It is clear from the tenor of discussion at the convention that the "other organization" many of the delegates had in mind was the U.F.C. (S.S.), and after an oftimes heated debate the following resolution was approved:

> Resolved that this Progressive gathering declares itself as believing in organized industrial group representation in the Legislature and House of Commons, and we strongly urge the United Farmers of Canada, Saskatchewan Section, to take such steps immediately as will assist in the nomination, financing and election to the legislature and to the House of Commons of representatives or organized agriculture.[118]

The U.F.C. (S.S.), of course, was quick to reaffirm its political neutrality; its constitution forbade direct political action and only the annual convention could change that.[119]

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[117] *Western Producer*, 14 July 1927.

[118] *Ibid.*, 21 July 1927. In the meantime, the Saskatchewan Progressive Association was prepared to adopt as its own the legislative programme of the U.F.C. (S.S.) as set forth in resolutions approved at the farmers' annual conventions.

[119] *Ibid.*, 14 July 1927.

The delegates also approved a statement of Progressive principles, chief of which was a belief "that the present party system of government in this province is detrimental to the best interests of our people." It had resulted in a division of Saskatchewan's citizens along purely artificial lines and subordinated the welfare of the province to that of party interests. To end the rule of what it termed "machine politics" the convention called for the abolition of patronage in government purchasing and the use of civil servants in election campaigns.[120] The rest of the platform was unexceptional; indeed as at least one Progressive had long recognized, this was one reason why the farmers had made so little political headway in Saskatchewan.[121]

Premier Gardiner could not resist the temptation to ridicule the efforts of the Progressives to rebuild their shattered party, and at a Liberal banquet in Regina some days later he announced that the poor attendance at their recent convention demonstrated the fact that the day of the "get-rich-easy politician" was past in Saskatchewan. He compared the failure of the Progressives with the ill-fated efforts of the Nonpartisan League, which he claimed had been led by men "some of them not even being citizens of the Dominion," who had collected large sums of money in 1917 and 1921 without electing a single member to the Legislature. Rather unwisely, and somewhat cheaply, he then went on to link the Progressives with the Ku Klux Klan, which, as will be seen, was active in Regina and Moose Jaw by this time. Like the Nonpartisan League, from which the Progressives had sprung, there was, he said, a similar organization at work in the province, again led by men "some of whom are not even citizens of the Dominion of Canada, and who are collecting money from citizens of our cities with the ostensible object of doing some good to the people of this country."[122] It was to prove a serious blunder, but at the time Gardiner's remarks attracted little notice. Certainly he had nothing to fear from the disorganized Progressives. Their weakness was apparent for all to see, and after yet another by-election defeat, in Maple Creek in December 1927, one dispirited party supporter was moved to wonder aloud whether "... as Progressives we merit the protection of the Game laws."[123]

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[120] *Ibid.*, 21 July 1927.

[121] AS, N. H. McTaggart Papers, L. J. Harvey to McTaggart, 19 August 1926.

The same might also have been said of the Conservatives, for the high hopes raised by J. T. M. Anderson's selection as party leader had not been realized. Indeed Anderson had remained leader only for a little over a year. Although he had impressed Conservatives in Regina and Ottawa with his ability, and had developed a close working relationship with Dr. Tran and the

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[122] *Leader*, 16 July 1926.

[123] *Legislative Directory*, p. 115; AS, N. H. McTaggart Papers, McTaggart to L. J. Harvey, 29 December 1927.

Progressives in the Legislature,[124] Anderson found the dual burden of leader and chief organizer too much to bear financially, and in December 1925 placed his resignation in the hands of the provincial executive.[125] He sought Meighen's assistance in obtaining employment as an immigration agent for the C.P.R., in Saskatoon,[126] without success as it turned out, and the resignation was made public early in March 1926.[127] Anderson was prepared to retain his seat in the Legislature, and even to act as House leader until a successor was chosen.[128] The name most frequently mentioned was that of M. A. MacPherson,[129] but he was reluctant to accept, believing that "... it would be an impossible position to be Leader and organizer at once."[130] As it turned out, a convention called for the purpose in June could come to no decision regarding a successor to Anderson. It did agree, though, that the new leader, whenever chosen, should not be responsible for organization work.[131] Anderson continued to sit in the Legislature and to act as House leader, but up to the end of 1927 no steps had been taken to choose a permanent party head.

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[124] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, F. L. Bastedo to Meighen, 19 August 1924, p. 77070; Meighen to G. A. Cruise, 20 June 1925, p. 77437; J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 9 December 1925, pp. 77345-46; same to same, 14 January 1926, pp. 33348-49.

[125] *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 28 December 1925, pp. 33344-45; same to same, 12 March 1926, pp. 33368-69.

[126] *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 28 December 1925, p. 33345; same to same, 18 January 1926, pp. 33351-54.

[127] *Leader*, 3 March 1926.

[128] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 2 March 1926, pp. 33364-66.

[129] *Ibid.*

[130] *Ibid.*, M. A. MacPherson to Meighen, 23 March 1926, pp. 77357-58.

Financial considerations seem to have been only partly responsible for Anderson's decision to relinquish the leadership. He had quickly become frustrated with the "... local jealousies, lack of faith in the party and an absence of enthusiasm generally" which had long plagued Saskatchewan Conservatism.[132] There were many in the party, including Anderson himself, who believed that a "real live daily newspaper" would soon remedy the situation,[133] but others considered the *malaise* to be much more deep-rooted. One of the latter was A. G. MacKinnon, a prominent Regina Conservative, who prepared a comprehensive report on the state of the party in the province for the new federal leader, R. B. Bennett, in October 1927. Among Saskatchewan farmers the party was unpopular because of its association with the high tariff stand of its federal counterpart; among the foreign-born it was handicapped by the fact that

> ... from the days of Clifford Sifton a studied attempt has been made to make the foreigner believe that the Liberal

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[131] *Leader*, 16 June 1926.

[132] PAC, Arthur Meighen Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 10 April 1926, p. 33376.

[133] *Ibid.*, W. Thompson to G. A. Cruise, 29 October 1925, pp. 41255-58; J. T. M. Anderson to Meighen, 2 March 1926, pp. 33364-65.

> Party is their party and this propaganda has been quite successful. The change in the condition of the immigrant from Central Europe, from persons having little or nothing in the Old Land to prosperous land owners in this country, is in many cases considered to be due to the Liberal Government ... When we add to this the statements made by many of our leading (?) Conservative friends, even in our own Province, denouncing the foreigners, it is easy to understand how this feeling, instead of being removed, has been intensified from year to year.

The French and Roman Catholic population of the province had also been largely alienated from the Conservative party since 1905. MacKinnon, who was himself a Catholic, pointed out that here too the party had not acted wisely:

> By that I mean that what we have done has tended to drive Catholics away rather than bring them back ... Whether justly or not Catholics generally in this province regard Dr. Anderson as unfriendly to them. His work amongst the Ruthenians while he was Inspector of their schools was regarded by many Catholics as proselytizing. For this reason it can be seen that he was at quite a disadvantage upon assuming the leadership of the Party so far as this particular class was concerned. Instead of getting as many Catholic leaders as possible to assist him he apparently made little progress in that respect and the result was therefore not very satisfactory.[134]

The narrowness of the party's appeal, and the absence of any coherent organization in many constituencies was reflected in the fact that the Conservatives contested only two of the eleven by-elections held during the two and a half years following the 1925 general election, and both of those were in urban ridings. In Saskatoon Howard McConnell, a popular alderman and later mayor, was elected for the Conservatives early in 1927, raising the party's representation in the Legislature to four.[135] It was the first time in over a decade that the Liberals had been defeated in a by-election. Some Conservatives attributed the result to the voters' resentment at being treated by the Gardiner government "like the half-breeds of Ile La Crosse [*sic*] who, for a drink of whiskey, could be herded to the polls by a few Government Road Inspectors" and saw it as proof that better days were in store for the party in Saskatchewan.[136] This optimism proved to be short-lived. The second by-election contested by the Conservatives, in Moose Jaw, was won easily by the Liberals a few months later.[137]

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[134] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, A. G. MacKinnon to Bennett, 31 October 1927, pp. 24849-58.

If there was, as one newspaper observed after the Moose Jaw contest, still no evidence of a Conservative revival in Saskatchewan,[138] the signs of a revival in the provincial economy were everywhere to be seen. The activities of banks and loan companies, the resurgence of construction activity in Saskatchewan towns and cities, and a healthy increase in motor vehicle registrations all pointed to the fact that the province was, as Premier Gardiner reported with pride to the Legislature early in 1927, "... ceasing to feel the pinch which a few years ago caused gloom to shroud an outlook which is naturally bright and optimistic."[139] It was wheat that made Saskatchewan prosperous, and yields continued to be good after 1925. The best year proved to be 1928, when the crop averaged 23.3 bushels per acre, and Saskatchewan farmers harvested a record 321,215,000 bushels of wheat.[140] This was the largest harvest in the province's history, and its size moved one Liberal to boast in the Legislature that it had in fact been "... the largest wheat crop produced in any State or Province in the whole world."[141] With immigrants again arriving in large numbers, cultivation was spreading steadily northward into the Park Belt. At the same time, better crops and higher prices were luring settlers back to the southwest, which had been ravaged by drought at the beginning of the decade.[142]

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[135] *Legislative Directory*, p. 141; *Western Producer*, 27 January 1927.

[136] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. J. Leddy to Bennett, 25 January 1927, pp. 6645-47; H. McConnell to H. Guthrie, 8 March 1927, p. 3341.

[137] *Legislative Directory*, p. 120.

[138] *Western Producer*, 26 May 1927.

Stimulated by this renewed prosperity, railway construction and secondary industry expanded appreciably. Railway construction in the province had slowed almost to a standstill after the war; now the railways were building additional lines to serve new settlements. By the end of 1928 annual construction had returned to a level almost equal to that reached before 1913.[143] Among the new industries established in the province none drew more attention, or more provincial pride, than the General Motors assembly plant in Regina which began turning out Chevrolet and Pontiac cars in December 1928.[144] Secondary industry still remained of small importance in the overall economic structure of the province. In 1928, for example, only 6,173 persons were classified as industrial workers, and the total value of manufacturing in Saskatchewan amounted to $69,125,280, a far cry from the $521,011,400 worth of grain, livestock and other agricultural commodities produced in the province that year.[145]

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[139] *Budget Speech*, 15 February 1927, pp. 1-2.

[140] *Agriculture Report*, 1929, p. 338.

[141] *Budget Speech*, 17 January 1929, p. 1.

[142] Fitzgerald, Part I, pp. 177-279; Saskatchewan, *A Submission by the Government of Saskatchewan to the Royal Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations* [hereafter cited as *Saskatchewan Submission*] (Regina: King's Printer, 1937), pp. 136-38.

[143] *Budget Speech*, 17 January 1929, p. 2.

While better crops after 1925 boosted farmers' incomes, and Saskatchewan again began to exhibit that jaunty optimism so prevalent during the boom years before the war, the prosperity was not as buoyant as might appear from the higher yields. By this time the average farm in Saskatchewan comprised more than two quarter sections, and farmers had also invested large sums in agricultural machinery.[146] It was during the 1920's that improvements in farm implements, particularly gasoline tractors, together with the introduction of the combine-harvester and the truck, began to transform wheat growing in the province. The number of tractors in use on Saskatchewan farms increased from 19,243 at the beginning of the decade to 43,308 by 1931; by that latter date there would be a total of 10,938 trucks and 6,019 combines in the province as well.[147] The price of wheat slowly but steadily declined after 1925, while the costs associated with operating a farm continued to increase, so that while yields were relatively good during these years, the farmer's purchasing power was shrinking.[148]

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[144] Drake, p. 182.

[145] *Agriculture Report,* 1929, p. 363; Saskatchewan, Department of Railways, Labour and Industries, *Annual Report,* 1930 (Regina: King's Printer, 1930), p. 10.

[146] Saskatchewan, *Report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture and Rural Life,* Vol. 2: *Mechanization and Farm Costs* (Regina: Queen's Printer, 1955), p. 42. The Commission estimated that total farm investment in land, buildings, livestock and farm machinery at this time (1927-1931) amounted to $1,425,000,000. Farm machinery accounted for $186,000,000 of the total; land and buildings $1,093,000,000 and livestock the remainder. (*Ibid.*, p. 27.)

The return of prosperity was also reflected in buoyant government revenues. Profits from the government's liquor stores alone provided approximately $2,000,000 in additional revenues each year after 1925. The Gardiner government was able to satisfy the demand for new or increased services, particularly in the fields of public welfare and highways, while at the same time recording surpluses in each of the last four years of the decade. The policy of retrenchment that had characterized Dunning's handling of provincial finances gradually gave way to a more expansive one, but neither Gardiner nor W. J. Patterson, the two men who held the Treasury portfolio after 1926, strayed far from the cautious policies that had been followed by their predecessor.[149] It was natural for the Liberals to continue policies during these prosperous years which had proven so financially and politically successful in more difficult times, and when the government was compelled in 1928 to introduce a gasoline tax to generate additional revenue, the Provincial Treasurer was able to boast that it was still the only new tax in ten years.[150]

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[147] *Ibid.*, pp. 1-2, 15-19, 34; *Saskatchewan Submission*, pp. 138-41. It should be emphasized, of course, that the real impact of these new machines on farming operations in the province was not to be felt for another two decades. It was only after the Second World War, for instance, that even the gasoline tractor was found on a majority of Saskatchewan farms, but the changeover from horses to tractors -- the most striking feature of the trend in farm mechanization that has taken place on the prairies since the turn of the century -- was already becoming apparent during the late 1920's. To be sure, the horse population of the province continued to increase during the decade as well, reaching a peak in 1926, when there were 1,104,300 head. Thereafter it began to decline, until by 1951 there were only 303,900 horses in Saskatchewan.

[148] *Saskatchewan Submission*, pp. 175, 179. Using 1914 prices as an index, the Saskatchewan government compiled statistics comparing the wide fluctuations in the price which the Saskatchewan farmer received for his wheat with the costs associated with operating his farm, including groceries, clothing, machinery, repairs, farm supplies, household equipment and municipal taxes. The index number of the price received by farmers for wheat fell below the index number of the 147 items making up farm costs in 1922, 1923 and 1924, reflecting the seriousness of the postwar depression. In 1925 the "price index" rose above the "cost index," but from 1925 to 1928 the difference between the two steadily declined, and by 1928 the former was once again lower than the latter.

A similarly cautious approach was apparent in the field of agricultural credit. The alarming liabilities incurred by the Farm Loan Board had compelled the government to curtail the Board's operations in 1921,[151] but with the gradual improvement in economic conditions the question of expanding its lending activities began to attract the attention of farmers and legislators alike. In 1925, for the first time in its history, the Board was able to pay all the interest due on advances from the government and a portion of the special advances which had been made for administrative purposes.[152] This was an encouraging sign, but Dunning had nevertheless sounded a note of caution in his last budget address:

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[149] D. B. Climenhaga, "Public Finance in Saskatchewan During the Settlement Process, 1905-1929" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1949), pp. 111-23.

[150] *Budget Speech*, 24 February 1928, p. 6.

[151] *Supra*, pp. 433-34.

> The province has already about $10,000,000 invested in the scheme. It is a lot of money and there is a limit to the extent to which it is wise and practicable for 800,000 people to pledge their credit for the service of a part of the people. We should continue to go steadily and slowly in the matter, impressing upon the farmers all the time that the fundamental of a long term system of agricultural credits must be promptitude of payment on the part of the borrowers ....[153]

Not all agreed with this view. Government advances to the Farm Loan Board became a controversial question in the Legislature after 1926, the point at issue being whether the Board should expand slowly and cautiously as advocated by Dunning, or whether there should be an immediate and substantial increase in the funds voted for farm loan purposes.[154] Lending activities in fact remained modest until 1927 but gradually, beginning in that year and becoming more pronounced in 1928, the Board began again to expand its operations.[155] This did not remove the Board from controversy; indeed it became an ever more popular subject for criticism in the Legislature. Opposition charges of inefficiency, maladministration of funds and undue political influence in the granting of loans eventually provoked the Provincial Treasurer to devote a considerable portion of his 1928 budget address to a discussion of the handicaps under which the Board laboured and a stout denial of any political interference in its lending activities.[156]

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[152] *Budget Speech*, 12 January 1926, p. 17.

[153] *Ibid.*, p. 18.

[154] *Leader*, 19 February 1927.

No less than its two predecessors, the Gardiner government also recognized the need to promote economic diversification and lessen the province's dependence on a single staple crop.[157] Although the return of prosperity presumably freed the government's hand to take a more active role in this field, there were in fact few new initiatives after Gardiner assumed the premiership in 1926. When the generous government encouragement given the lignite briquetting experiments at Bienfait failed to produce a commercially viable product, the plant was sold to private interests and it was left to the new owners to carry on the work of developing a cheap and reliable domestic fuel from Saskatchewan lignite.[158]

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[155] Green, p. 108.

[156] *Leader*, 19 February 1927, 28 January 1928; *Budget Speech*, 24 February 1928, pp. 9-11.

[157] *Leader*, 18 November 1926, 14 February 1928.

[158] *Ibid.*, 1 September 1927; Saskatchewan, Department of Railways, Labour and Industries, *Annual Report*, 1929 (Regina: King's Printer, 1929), pp. 18-20.

Production of coal in the Souris fields showed a slow but steady increase during the decade after the war, from 379,347 tons in 1919 to 577,820 tons in 1929, but the market remained a limited one. In the case of the smaller mines, many of which operated for only a few months each year, it was confined largely to local farmers and nearby villages. Only the larger mines, which supplied coal to communities across southern Saskatchewan and parts of Manitoba, including Winnipeg, were able to operate year round.[159] The flurry of activity at Flin Flon, on the Manitoba-Saskatchewan border, gave rise to expectations of further development of the mineral wealth in Saskatchewan's northern hinterland, but at the end of the decade nothing substantial had yet materialized.[160] As for the lumber industry, it had gone into a state of decline after 1918. The two largest mills had ceased to operate entirely, and by the end of the 1920's the annual cut had fallen to little more than half of what it had been during the war years.[161]

The one significant initiative undertaken by the Gardiner government after 1926 was in the field of public power. It will be remembered that Premier Dunning had intimated during the 1925 provincial election campaign that his government intended to invesitgate the feasibility of establishing a provincial power scheme.[162] Cheap power was the key to agricultural and industrial development, he had told the voters, but two federal election campaigns and a change in the premiership intervened before any concrete action was taken. Not until the summer of 1926 did Premier Gardiner begin to give serious consideration to the appointment of a royal commission, and the Power Resources Commission was not in fact appointed until January 1927.[163]

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[159] Saskatchewan, Bureau of Labour and Industries, *Annual Report*, 1922, pp. 7-9; Department of Railways, Labour and Industries, *Annual Report*, 1930, p. 50.

[160] Saskatchewan, Department of Railways, Labour and Industries, *Annual Report*, 1929, pp. 23-25.

[161] *Ibid.*, 1930, p. 49.

It was to prove a costly delay, for in the meantime private power concerns had begun to show an interest in the province, buying up existing municipally-owned plants and offering attractive proposals for furnishing power to communities across Saskatchewan.[164] The selection of the members of the Power Resources Commission has also been criticized, for none of the four men named to conduct the inquiry were technical experts. Only one, L. A. Thornton, the Chairman, was even remotely familiar with recent developments in the generation and transmission of electrical energy. The fact that they could apparently be induced to reject a series of recommendations reached after months of investigation and substitute others which would be more politically palatable suggests that they were anything but independent.[165]

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[162] *Supra,* pp. 608-10.

[163] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to W. M. Thrasher, 28 July 1926, p. 5485; *Leader,* 10 January 1927.

[164] White, pp. 78-80.

These shortcomings were not yet apparent in January 1927. The government's decision to make a sweeping investigation of all aspects of the power question was warmly applauded, even by members of the Opposition,[166] and the Commission proceeded in a somewhat leisurely fashion to conduct hearings across the province during the spring and summer months.[167] The Liberals apparently expected that the Commission would have at least an interim report ready for consideration at the next session of the Legislature.[168] In fact it had not yet been received by the time the session began, and the Speech from the Throne contained only a vague reference to the power question.[169]

This did not satisfy the Opposition. Progressives and Conservatives alike accused the government of making a serious blunder in appointing "part-time investigators." Private interests were actively bidding for franchises, and if action was not taken soon the government would "wake up to find the villages, towns and cities of the province tied up for twenty years."[170] The Premier replied somewhat lamely that it was "just possible" that the Power Commission would not be in a position to make a report before the end of the session, but that it was not necessary that the report be available before the government could take action. He promised rather grandly that legislation would be brought down that would "put Saskatchewan abreast of any part of Canada in the matter of power development ...."[171]

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[165] *Ibid.*, pp. 81-83. Louis A. Thornton was City Commissioner of Regina, Alexander R. Greig was a professor of agricultural engineering at the University of Saskatchewan and Arthur Hitchcock was a Moose Jaw businessman. The fourth member of the Power Resources Commission, the secretary, was Robert N. Blackburn, Chief Mechanical Superintendent of the Department of Public Works.

[166] *Leader*, 11 January 1927, 25 January 1927; *Western Producer*, 13 January 1927.

[167] White, pp. 83-87.

[168] *Leader*, 24 January 1928.

[169] White, p. 87; *Journals*, 1928, p. 8.

The three bills which were eventually introduced and approved during the 1928 session hardly did that, though they did provide a basis for future action. In a general way too they satisfied the preliminary recommendations of the Winnipeg firm of consulting engineers retained by the Power Commission: that early hydroelectric development in Saskatchewan was impractical and that the government should instead build a central steam generating plant large enough to serve the three major cities.[172] Apart from a vague statement by the minister responsible for power development, George Spence, that "pending the receipt of the commission's report the government stands at the bridge head to guard the interests of the province in power development" and another by Gardiner advising municipalities to take care before disposing of their plants to private companies,[173] the session ended with no hint of what specific lines of action the Liberals proposed to take.

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[170] *Leader*, 28 January 1928, 31 January 1928.

[171] *Ibid.*, 31 January 1928.

[172] White, pp. 87-88. The first bill created a new Department of Railways, Labour and Industries, to be headed by George Spence, with wide powers to construct, or expropriate, and operate power plants and electrical transmission facilities. A second gave that minister the authority to oversee the construction of power lines outside the limits of towns and cities, thereby ensuring that all equipment would be of a uniform standard in the event the government decided to incorporate such lines into a single network. A third was designed to protect the bondholders of communities which were selling or might in the future sell their

Why were the Liberals so reticent about the policy they intended to pursue on the power question? One critic has suggested that "... before adopting a policy [the government] evidently wished to possess a plan of known acceptability by which to implement it." In other words, Premier Gardiner wished to have all the facts before he approached the three largest cities, which after all consumed the bulk of the power generated in the province and were the key to the success of any government power scheme.[174] The Premier and his colleagues may also have been looking farther ahead, to the next provincial election. "The Conservative party," Gardiner confided to a former colleague toward the end of the legislative session,

> are very anxious to have us announce a policy on the power question; their main objective being to know what we are intending to do before they go into convention in the middle of March so that they can draft their policy

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power plants to private interests, by requiring that all sales be approved by the Local Government Board. (Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 18 Geo. V, Chapters 11, 32, 41.)

[173] *Leader*, 14 February 1928, 16 February 1928.

[174] White, pp. 92-93.

> accordingly. We do not intend to make an announcement before that date.[175]

Political considerations would dictate that the Premier not be too quick to show his hand, for there could be no better achievement to take to the voters in a year or eighteen months' time than a successful power scheme which would once again demonstrate the ability and vigour of the party which had ruled the province since 1905.

As 1927 gave way to 1928 Saskatchewan was prosperous, the government was secure and its opponents were in disarray. Yet privately some prominent Liberals were uneasy:

> It is of course impossible to estimate the situation in the country - I would say that just at present it is alright - but in the cities it is bad. Inside the house things are not as they should be - there is too much talking going on. The loss of Archie [McNab] is not appreciated by the members of the G[overnment] - and I think they lost the most useful man they had. However things may improve - but certan [*sic*] the present position is adding no strength.[176]

The feud between Dunning and Gardiner showed no signs of abating, and this too caused concern among Liberals. In his only recorded direct attack on Dunning, over the attitude of the federal Liberals toward the Bracken government in Manitoba, Gardiner complained to Mackenzie King early in 1928 that he was

> ... growing tired of having the political situation in the west in the hands of a man who treats us like a group of

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[175] AS, J. A. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to C. A. Dunning, 28 February 1928, p. 7931.

[176] QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, W. M. Martin to Dunning, 26 January 1927. For a similar expression of opinion see AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, W. G. Ross to Gardiner, 16 April 1927, p. 8466.

> school boys .... The whole provincial organization here are becoming restless under the treatment we are receiving from this man ....[177]

All was not well within the ranks of Saskatchewan Liberalism. If the party was weaker than it had been in happier times, as some seemed to think, Liberals could still draw comfort from the fact that their opponents found themselves in even more difficult circumstances.

It is well known, of course, that by the time Saskatchewan voters again went to the polls in a general election the political situation had completely changed. On 6 June 1929 Liberal strength in the Legislature was nearly halved, leaving the party without even a bare majority in that body for the first time, and by September Dr. J. T. M. Anderson and his Co-operative Government had come to power. This dramatic reversal of political fortunes was not the result of any widespread disenchantment with the record of the Gardiner government in the economic sphere; rather it was a reflection of other more deeply-rooted tensions in provincial society which came to occupy the centre of the political stage in 1928 and 1929.

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[177] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 17 January 1928, pp. 129730-35. Gardiner's outburst brought King "pain as well as surprise" for the Prime Minister "... had very strongly the feeling when you were last in Ottawa that as between Dunning and yourself all past differences had been wiped out, and that you were working together in complete accord." (*Ibid.*, King to J. G. Gardiner, 3 March 1928, pp. 129740-41.)

CHAPTER X

THE POLITICS OF PREJUDICE, 1928-1929

It was not the coinciding improvement in wheat prices and yields alone which was responsible for Saskatchewan's prosperity during the last half of the 1920's. As in the years before 1914 immigrants were again making their way into the province, attracted by the combined efforts of the federal government and the railways. During and immediately after the war Canada's immigration policy had become increasingly restrictive, but beginning in 1922 Ottawa had slowly begun to resume an active immigration campaign, concentrated initially in Great Britain and the United States but extended the following year to continental Europe. Preference was given to immigrants from Britain and northwestern Europe, and special incentives in the form of reduced fares and loans were offered to attract people from the mother country. The most ambitious effort of this kind was the "Three Thousand British Family Scheme" launched in 1924, under which loans for passage and settlement were made available to families selected by the British government.[1]

This had not satisfied the railway companies, boards of trade, newspapers and ethnic groups who were pressing the federal authorities to open the immigration gates still wider. They contended that only a limited immigration could be expected from the United States, Great Britain and the "preferred" countries of northern Europe, and that in all likelihood only central and eastern Europeans would do the rugged work of clearing unsettled farm land. The strongest pressure for more immigration naturally came from the railways, and at length Ottawa succumbed to their arguments. While continuing to emphasize its efforts to secure British immigrants, the King government entered into the so-called "Railways Agreement" with the C.P.R. and the C.N.R. in September 1925. It authorized the railways to encourage potential immigrants from the "non-preferred" central and eastern European countries to emigrate to Canada and to settle as "agriculturalists, agricultural workers and domestic servants." The agreement was to extend over a period of two years, and was renewed in October 1927 for another three years.[2]

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[1] J. B. Hedges, *Building the Canadian West: The Land and Colonization Policies of the Canadian Pacific Railway* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1939), pp. 357-61; M. F. Smeltzer, "Saskatchewan Opinion on Immigration from 1920-1939" (unpublished M.A. thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1950), pp. 1-4, 11-16, 35-41.

The total number of immigrants who gave Saskatchewan as their intended destination increased from 8,186 in 1923 to 14,041 in 1925 and 20,085 in 1927.[3] Not all came under the auspices of the Railways Agreement, of course, but they swelled the number of central, eastern and southern Europeans in the province from 14.8 per cent of the total population in 1911 to 20 per cent by 1931. Germans comprised roughly the same proportion of the population in 1931 -- 14 per cent -- as they had before the war, but those of British origin, the largest single group in the province, saw their relative position steadily deteriorate. The sharpest decline came in the 1920's. While people of British origin had accounted for 54.7 per cent of the total population of Saskatchewan in 1911, and could still claim 52.8 per cent in 1921, they comprised only 47.5 per cent by the time of the next census.[4]

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[2] Hedges, pp. 361-62. Immigration regulations introduced in 1923 had classified Austria, Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Lithuania, Estonia, Latvia, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia as "non-preferred" and limited immigration from those countries to agricultural and domestic workers and sponsored immigrants. (*Ibid.*, pp. 360-61.)

[3] *Agriculture Report*, 1929, p. 370.

This second major influx of central and eastern Europeans aroused mixed emotions in Saskatchewan. Many, of course, welcomed these newcomers, believing that Canada needed men who would go on the land, provide traffic for the railways and expand the domestic market for Canadian manufacturers. "We want men, no matter from what nation they come," Premier Gardiner told the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in 1927,

> who are willing to devote their lives to hard labor if they know they will wring a proper reward from their toil. So far as we are concerned, in the most cosmopolitan province in the Dominion, we recognize men of worth, no matter where they come from.[5]

Others were vaguely uneasy or openly hostile toward the unrestricted influx of continental European immigrants. In one sense, of course there was nothing new in this. Immigrants from Great Britain and the United States had always been welcomed in Saskatchewan. In broad cultural terms to be British was to be acceptable for Canada was, after all, a "British" nation. The cultural and political background of most of the American settlers who made their homes in the province also made it relatively easy for them to be accepted. The same could not be said of the central and eastern Europeans who had first begun to come to Saskatchewan in large numbers during the years of the Laurier boom. Even before 1914 the Conservative party and not a few Protestant clergymen had expressed fears that these illiterate peasants would undermine "Anglo-Saxon" political institutions. The war had given a new impetus to the assimilationist cause, and to the view that the public school should be the major instrument of Canadianization. The return of the veterans in 1918 and 1919 had further intensified hostility toward all "foreigners." Not only were veterans forced to compete with these people for jobs, but "foreigners" were associated in the public mind with labour radicalism, especially in the aftermath of the Winnipeg General Strike.

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[4] Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism*, Book IV: *The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups*, (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1970), p. 262.

[5] *Leader*, 15 September 1927. For similar expressions of opinion see *ibid.*, 3 February 1928 and PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, F. N. Darke to L. Moyer, 5 December 1925, pp. 96836-38.

There had always been some in Saskatchewan, then, who viewed the immigrant from central or eastern Europe with suspicion. What set the postwar decade apart was the fact that for the first time there was widespread public questioning of the fundamental assumptions of Canadian immigration policy. The notion that more immigrants were needed to fill up Saskatchewan's remaining vacant lands in order to develop the nation as a whole came to be regarded with skepticism, and there was a growing clamour in favour of a policy of restricting immigration to those groups that were considered desirable. Public opinion in the province extended in a broad spectrum from the relatively moderate views of farm and labour organizations through those of Protestant church bodies and the Royal Canadian Legion to the shrill campaign against the "menace" of unrestricted immigration from continental Europe waged by the National Association of Canada and the Ku Klux Klan. The gathering storm over the uncontrolled influx of central and eastern Europeans that swept across Saskatchewan during the late 1920's was to have important repercussions in provincial politics. Indeed it was to play a major role in the downfall of the Gardiner regime, and for this reason it merits closer scrutiny.

Farmers had first begun to question the desirability of any further immigration during the economic depression of the early 1920's. Fearing that more newcomers would provide unneeded economic competition at a time when farmers were trying to cope with a drastic decline in grain prices, both the S.G.G.A. and the Farmers' Union went on record as being opposed to any grandiose colonization schemes until economic conditions improved.[6] Saskatchewan's Progressive contingent at Ottawa was divided on the issue. Some, like J. F. Johnston, John Morrison, John Millar and C. W. Stewart, wished to see a steady stream of immigration into the province, and had few reservations about the type of immigrant. Of the remainder, most were opposed to an active immigration policy for economic reasons, though a few, notably John Evans and A. J. Lewis, based their arguments on racial grounds.[7]

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[6] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1923, p. 69; F.U.C. Papers, *Annual Convention of the Farmers' Union of Canada Held at Saskatoon, July 21-24, 1925*, p. 4.

Even after prosperity returned later in the decade few farmers were aggressively expansionist. For one thing, as has already been pointed out, the price of wheat, and with it farmers' purchasing power, were slowly but steadily declining after 1925.[8] No less disturbing was the fact that as many European countries recovered from the war they began to encourage greater domestic production of grain and other foodstuffs and restrict imports.[9] Under these circumstances farmers began to suspect that new settlements meant competition for them in a limited market. The U.F.C. (S.S.) spoke for many farmers in the province when it called in 1928 for a moratorium on all further colonization schemes for a year or two. It objected also to the easy credit terms offered to immigrants by the railways and the Three Thousand British Family Scheme, since their own sons were unable to acquire farms on such attractive terms and were leaving the land as a consequence.[10]

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[7] Courville, pp. 94-104.

[8] *Supra*, pp. 665-66.

[9] W. T. Easterbrook and H. G. J. Aitken, *Canadian Economic History* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1956), pp. 489-92; A. E. Safarian, *The Canadian Economy in the Great Depression* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959), pp. 25-26.

Organized labour, though not nearly as influential as the farmers, was also outspokenly hostile to the ambitious schemes of the railways and the land companies. Before the war Saskatchewan's trade unionists had directed most of their ire against sponsored immigration, contract labour and Orientals. In the 1920's they increasingly turned their attention to the central and eastern European.[11] Their opposition to unrestricted immigration was based on the fear that newcomers from continental Europe would displace British and Canadian workers already in the province. Such concern was not without foundation, for the very thing was happening before their eyes in the Souris coal fields. Until 1914 skilled men from Great Britain had comprised the bulk of the labour force there. After the war broke out a shift in the ethnic balance gradually became apparent, as mine owners hired more and more "Galicians" to replace men who had enlisted. The owners came to prefer these people, largely unskilled and lacking even a rudimentary knowledge of English, because they accepted the low wages, long hours and poor working conditions without complaint. British-born miners continued to move out after the war, and their jobs were taken by

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[10] AS, U.F.C. (S.S.) Papers, Immigration File, memorandum presented by the U.F.C. (S.S.) to the federal government, February 1928; *Western Producer*, 17 May 1928, 2 August 1928.

[11] Cherwinski, "Organized Labour in Saskatchewan," pp. 326-29.

Poles, Russians and Ukrainians.[12]

Trade unionists were also concerned that many central and eastern European immigrants who had come to Saskatchewan intending to farm soon drifted into the province's few urban centres, where again they competed for jobs. Seasonal unemployment had always been a problem in Saskatchewan, and it became more serious during the first decade after the war. Farm labour was being replaced by machines and, except at harvest time, Regina and other cities had large numbers of unskilled men seeking work.[13] Many of the immigrants from central and eastern Europe lacked the capital to buy farms and experienced difficulty in finding work as agricultural labourers because established farmers preferred English-speaking workers.[14] The continued drift of immigrants from the farms to the cities only added further fuel to labour's opposition to an immigration policy which threatened to seriously lower the standard of living of the workingman.[15]

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[12] *Ibid.*, pp. 164-66.

[13] *Ibid.*, pp. 102-105, 324-25; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, C. Stewart to Gardiner, 30 June 1927, p. 7806; U.F.C. (S.S.) Papers, Immigration File, resolution passed by Regina City Council, 5 April 1927; M. J. Coldwell to G. F. Edwards, 20 January 1928; *Leader*, 6 June 1928.

[14] AS, U.F.C. (S.S.) Papers, Immigration File, W. J. Coe to G. F. Edwards, 2 May 1927; G. F. Edwards to J. Huddlestone, 16 May 1927; PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, R. W. McKinnon to R. Forke, 6 February 1928, pp. 31378-79.

[15] *Saskatoon Star*, 9 August 1928.

For others in Saskatchewan, the question was not only whether the economy could accommodate large numbers of immigrants, but also whether society could assimilate them. At war's end the Saskatchewan branch of the Great War Veterans' Association was quick to pass a resolution requesting the federal government to ban all immigration from Germany, Austria-Hungary and Soviet Russia for a period of five years, and impose an educational test on all who wished to enter Canada after that time.[16] Throughout the decade veterans' groups in the province continued to oppose all efforts to relax restrictions and lower qualifications of entry. By 1927 the Royal Canadian Legion, successor to the G.W.V.A., had come to the conclusion that immigration should be restricted "... to such races as are so related to the British and French peoples by blood or tradition as to be readily assimilated and amenable to our traditions, customs and laws."[17] At the same time the provincial command made arrangements to gather more information on the subject, and a committee was struck to prepare a report for presentation to the next national convention in 1928.[18]

This committee proceeded to circulate a detailed questionnaire to all Legion branches in the province. Fifty-three per cent of the branches responded, and their replies formed the basis of a detailed report on immigration issued to the public in March 1928. The Legion praised the efforts of the Soldier Settlement Board, the Three Thousand British Family Scheme and other agencies in promoting immigration from Great Britain. It made no effort to disguise its preference for British immigrants, even going so far as to produce statistics showing that the British-born established the most permanent community roots of any group in the province. Dutch and Scandinavian settlers were also desirable, in the Legion's view, but central and eastern Europeans could not readily be assimilated and the Mennonites were even more objectionable in this respect. No real support for such abstract concepts as loyalty to Canada and the British Empire could ever be expected from these latter groups. The Legion therefore recommended that the Railways Agreement be annulled at once, that Ottawa appoint a royal commission to investigate all phases of the immigration question and that the provincial government take steps to encourage more British immigrants to make their homes in Saskatchewan.[19] The report drew warm praise from the *Western Producer*, and even the *Leader* remarked that it "... well merits close examination by all citizens."[20] Its demand for a royal commission was taken up by the organized farmers, and endorsed by an immigration convention sponsored by the U.F.C. (S.S.) in August 1928. The gathering was attended by representatives from the S.A.R.M. and its urban counterpart, the Union of Saskatchewan Municipalities, the Saskatoon Trades and Labour Council, the Legion, and the Women's British Immigration League, as well as the farmers. It too concluded that

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[16] *Leader*, 11 March 1920.

[17] *Saskatoon Star*, 11 June 1927.

[18] Smeltzer, p. 76.

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[19] *Leader*, 31 March 1928.

[20] *Ibid.*, 2 April 1928; *Western Producer*, 5 April 1928.

> the present policy of bringing in excessive numbers of immigrants is not to the benefit of the Dominion as a whole, inasmuch as large numbers of recent arrivals are not being assimilated, except at the expense of those who have been resident in Canada for a number of years, accentuating the economic problem and its effect upon the standard of living.[21]

Churches and churchmen in Saskatchewan expressed a variety of opinions on the question of immigration during the 1920's. Many took an active interest in promoting immigration and helping newcomers to adjust to their new homeland. The Baptist Church, for example, co-operated with the parent church in Great Britain in placing immigrants in the province, and the Salvation Army and the Presbyterians had similar programmes. The Norwegian Lutheran Church was also active, extending its organization to all Norwegian communities in the province by 1927. That same year the Jewish Colonization Association announced plans to bring Jewish settlers to completely equipped farms in Saskatchewan.[22]

The Roman Catholic Church also stood ready to offer assistance. A German Catholic Aid Society was established in 1927 to meet newcomers, help them overcome language difficulties and assist them in purchasing land and machinery.[23] It would be a mistake, though, to assume that the Catholic response to immigration during these years was entirely a favourable one. Irish Catholics on the prairies, like their counterparts in the United States, early opted for the assimilation and Canadianization of the immigrant. On the other hand the French, who still constituted the largest single group within the Church in western Canada, believed that preserving the native tongues of the various Catholic immigrant groups was the best means of preserving their faith. It was this latter view which had predominated before 1914, when the Church had attempted to provide the faithful with clergy of their own nationality whenever possible, founded and supported ethnic newspapers and encouraged co-operation between such groups as the *A.C.F.C.*, and *Deutsche Katholische Volksverein* and the Polish Catholic Association. The hierarchy was also naturally interested in promoting Catholic immigration to western Canada. Special attention had long been devoted to those French Canadians who had migrated to the mill towns of New England. Some of the Roman Catholic priests engaged in repatriating these Franco-Americans were also federal immigration agents.[24] Their activities came to be viewed by Protestants, laymen and clergy alike, as part of a sinister conspiracy between the Roman Catholic Church and the federal government, and the influx of large numbers of non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants, many of them Catholic, was often interpreted in the same light during the late 1920's.[25]

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[21] *Western Producer*, 23 August 1928.

[22] Smeltzer, pp. 52, 75-76.

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[23] *Ibid.*, p. 76.

[24] R. J. A. Huel, "French-Speaking Bishops and the Cultural Mosaic in Western Canada," *Religion and Society in the Prairie West*, ed. R. Allen (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1974), pp. 53-64.

The most outspoken critic of Canadian immigration policy among the ranks of Saskatchewan churchmen was the Right Rev. George Exton Lloyd, the Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Saskatchewan, and one of the founders of the Barr Colony at Lloydminster. In the absence of a detailed biographical study, any explanation of Lloyd's growing hostility to the "New Canadian" from central or eastern Europe must remain a speculative one. It may have been a reflection of the frustration of his early hopes to preserve the west for those of British birth. Like Rev. Isaac M. Barr, Lloyd had conceived this all-British colony at Lloydminster as a bulwark against the influx of Americans and Europeans who were pouring into the west at the turn of the century.[26] The tide had not been stemmed, of course, and the west had become more, not less, cosmopolitan. Then too, Lloyd had been closely associated with the prohibition movement. It had failed to make good the gains that had been won during the war years, and it would have been easy for him to blame the central and eastern European immigrant for the defeat of the Saskatchewan Temperance Act since these people had been at best lukewarm, if not openly hostile, to the cause he had long championed. Whatever the explanation, Lloyd emerged in the early 1920's as the most persistent, if not always tactful, opponent of an immigration policy which he believed was eroding British traditions and institutions in western Canada.

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[25] Smeltzer, p. 82-85.

[26] Brown and Cook, pp. 58-60; T. C. B. Boon, *The Anglican Church from the Bay to the Rockies: A History of the Ecclesiastical Province of Rupert's Land and Its Dioceses from 1820 to 1950* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1962), pp. 290-93.

In 1922 Lloyd called for a complete ban on all alien immigration for ten years, and an aggressive campaign to Canadianize those already in the country.[27] Four years later the Bishop informed the annual synod of the Anglican Diocese of Saskatchewan that

> we have no longer an Anglo-Saxon majority in these three Prairie Provinces. As far as this diocese is concerned we are rapidly approaching the time when the question is -- whether we can maintain many Anglo-Saxon communities outside the cities and towns.[28]

In a torrent of speeches and newspaper articles Lloyd continued to warn that Canada was in danger of becoming a "mongrel" nation. He placed the blame squarely at the door of the federal Liberals. It was they who had given the two railways the liberty to "denationalize" the country in 1925, and the Railways Agreement was now flooding the prairies with thousands of "dirty ignorant garlic smelling foreigners."[29] Lloyd's intemperate attacks did not go unchallenged.

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[27] *Saskatoon Star*, 6 May 1922, 18 October 1922.

[28] Quoted in Smeltzer, p. 57.

[29] *C.A.R.*, 1927-1928, p. 189, 1928-1929, pp. 162-63; *Saskatoon Star*, 28 April 1928.

The Regina branch of the *Volksverein*, for instance, passed a resolution protesting against this "disturbance of the national and religious peace prevailing in Western Canada" and expressing the hope that

> ... the government at Ottawa ... will not let themselves be influenced by the demands of Bishop Lloyd regarding the immigration problem. On the contrary [we] expect the government will do all they can in favoring the immigration of German-speaking people who are counted to be among the best settlers, the most progressive farmers, the most loyal citizens and the most cultured people in Western Canada. Our new homeland, for her further development, urgently requires people of this trait.[30]

Unmoved by such criticism, Bishop Lloyd continued to ridicule the idea that Canada could exist as a heterogeneous nation. Even in the United States the "melting pot" had produced only a mass of hyphenated Americans, and he predicted that the continued influx of a multiplicity of racial groups with different instincts, traditions and ideals would soon swamp and paralyze British institutions and traditions in his own country.[31] To rally support for his campaign against continental European immigration Bishop Lloyd organized the National Association of Canada in 1928. Its appeal was directed toward the existing patriotic organizations which were concerned with maintaining the British tie -- the Sons of England, the Orange Lodge and the Royal Canadian Legion. There is little evidence to show how much support Lloyd was able to enlist in Saskatchewan for the National Association of Canada, but there certainly was some activity.[32]

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[30] *Western Producer*, 11 October 1928.

[31] *Saskatoon Star*, 29 August 1928, 5 September 1928.

Far more visible was the impact of the Ku Klux Klan. It came into short-lived prominence in the province during the late 1920's, and found a ready audience for its gospel of racial and religious bigotry. The Invisible Empire of the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan had originated in Tennessee following the American Civil War, and it shrank neither from intimidation nor from violence in a successful effort to prevent former slaves from exercising their recently acquired political and economic rights. Dissolved in 1869, the Klan reappeared in 1915, and in its new guise portrayed itself as the defender of Americanism, Protestant Christianity and white supremacy. It accepted only native-born Protestant whites into its ranks and combined an anti-Negro with an anti-foreign and anti-Catholic outlook. Klan membership was concentrated primarily in the southern and midwestern states, and increased rapidly after the war, reaching a total of more than 3,000,000 at the peak of its popularity.[33]

The Klan early extended its proselytizing efforts to Canada. Klan organizers were reportedly soliciting members in Montreal in 1921, and Klaverns, as its local branches were known in Klan nomenclature, had appeared in British Columbia, New Brunswick, Ontario and Alberta by mid-decade.[34] It was in Saskatchewan, though, that the Klan was to enjoy its most spectacular success. Late in 1926 three Klansmen from Indiana -- Lewis A. Scott, his son Harold and Hugh Finley "Pat" Emmons -- arrived in Regina to begin organization work.[35] Before the end of the year Klan propaganda was being distributed in the Saskatchewan capital, and many had to be turned away when Emmons addressed his first public rally in a local theatre. In Indiana the Klan had built its organization campaign around three themes: antipathy to Negroes, Jews, Catholics and immigrants; the promotion of the public school as a patriotic and Protestant institution; and opposition to crime and vice, particularly bootlegging.[36] This appeal had to be modified somewhat to suit local conditions. Thus Emmons devoted scant attention to Negroes and Jews; instead he attacked the Railways Agreement and called for tighter immigration laws and the retention of English as the only official language in the province. The Ku Klux Klan, Emmons declared, was "a great Christian, benevolent fraternal organization ... that is going to save Canada for

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[32] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, T. C. Davis to King, 29 May 1928, p. 129024; same to same, 1 June 1928, p. 129025.

[33] D. M. Chalmers, *Hooded Americanism: The First Century of the Ku Klux Klan, 1865-1965* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, 1965), pp. 1-38, 109-18, 291-99.

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[34] Calderwood, pp. 9-27; H. Palmer, "Nativism in Alberta, 1925-1930," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers*, 1974, pp. 192-98.

[35] Calderwood, pp. 28-32.

[36] K. T. Jackson, *The Ku Klux Klan in the City, 1915-1930* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1967), pp. 144-60; Chalmers, pp. 162-74.

Canadians."[37]

The Klan soon attracted a considerable following in Regina, but the most spectacular of its early successes came forty miles west of the Saskatchewan capital. Since the war, and particularly since the advent of national prohibition in the United States, Moose Jaw had acquired something of an unsavory reputation as a haven for criminals. Bootlegging, rum running, gambling, prostitution and dope peddling all flourished along Moose Jaw's River Street during the 1920's with little obstruction from the police.[38] Emmons, who had himself once been a saloon keeper and professional gambler before joining the Klan, began organizing Moose Jaw in the early weeks of 1927. "Clean Up River Street" became the watchword of his campaign. At one meeting Emmons was said to have informed his audience that "I know the River Street gang is out to get me ... but if they do I want you to use my hide as the skin of a drum and beat it loud and long as you march along carrying the crusade down that sinful street of depravity."[39] With such an appeal the Klan grew rapidly, and Moose Jaw soon boasted the largest membership of any Klavern in the province, more than 2,000 by October 1927.[40] Moose Jaw was also the site of the Klan's first "monster" rally in Saskatchewan. Several thousand were reported to have attended the event on 7 June 1927 which culminated with the burning of "a huge Cross towering high into the Heavens" on Moose Jaw's South Hill, a spectacle that was visible from all parts of the city.[41] During the period Klaverns also sprang up in a number of smaller communities along the C.P.R. line east of Regina and in southwestern Saskatchewan.[42]

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[37] Quoted in Drake, p. 177.

[38] G. H. Robertson, "Moose Jaw: Playboy of the Prairies" *Maclean's Magazine*, 1 May 1951, pp. 14-15, 54-55, 57; R. Moon, *This Is Saskatchewan* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1953), pp. 44-47; J. Gray, *Red Lights on the Prairies* (Toronto: Macmillan Company of Canada, 1971), pp. 75-86.

[39] Quoted in Robertson, p. 57.

The Klan's momentum was temporarily halted in the fall of 1927 when Emmons and the Scotts suddenly disappeared from the province, taking the membership funds they had collected with them.[43] Local Klansmen were in a quandary. If charges were laid the organization would doubtless receive a good deal of unfavourable publicity, yet if nothing were done the money might never be recovered. They sought the advice of Premier Gardiner, with whom the Klan was still on friendly terms. He replied that since the money had been obtained under false pretenses, there was good reason to believe that legal proceedings would be successful. In the end the "Invisible Empire" decided to take no official action as an organization, but it was arranged that two or three individual members would lay charges "to the effect that small amounts had been received under false pretenses ...."[44] Warrants were duly issued for the arrest of the missing Klansmen,[45] but a continent-wide search unearthed no clues as to their whereabouts.

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[40] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, J. H. Hawkins to J. E. Huckins, 17 October 1927, p. 12677. Hawkins claimed a membership of 1,000 in Regina in the same letter.

[41] *Moose Jaw Evening Times*, 8 June 1927.

[42] Calderwood, pp. 34, 37.

[43] *Ibid.*, pp. 44-45.

This whole affair might well have been expected to sound the death knell of the Klan in Saskatchewan, but instead it continued to grow and prosper under the direction of a new triumvirate. Klansmen held a province-wide convention in Moose Jaw and chose J. W. Rossborough, a Regina accountant who had once been employed by the provincial government, to lead them as Imperial Wizard.[46] A far more colourful figure was J. H. Hawkins, who succeeded Lewis Scott as King Kleagle (chief organizer) for Saskatchewan. By turns a lawyer, optometrist, teacher and Klansman in the United States and Ontario, Hawkins made his first appearance at a Klan rally in Moose Jaw on 27 October 1927.[47] By all accounts Hawkins was an impressive figure on a public platform. "He was a tall man with a mane of white hair," one observer later recalled, "his frock coat and striped trousers seemed as appropriate on him as a peaked cap and overalls on a Saskatchewan farmer."[48] Another who was acquainted with Hawkins' work in Ontario was similarly impressed. "This man Hawkins," he warned Premier Gardiner, "is as smooth as a silk worm's belly."[49] The third prominent Klan spokesman to emerge during this period was J. J. Maloney. Maloney advertized himself as a former candidate for the priesthood who had been inspired by divine intervention to forsake the Church altogether and launch a one-man campaign to warn others of the evils of Roman Catholicism.[50] He had apparently visited the province briefly in 1926, during the by-election campaign in Prince Albert which had seen Mackenzie King returned to Parliament.[51] In May 1927 Maloney returned, this time to assist in spreading the Klan's message across Saskatchewan.[52]

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[44] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to Rev. J. L. Nicol, 11 February 1928, pp. 12078-79.

[45] *Moose Jaw Evening Times*, 1 October 1927; *Leader*, 18 October 1927.

[46] Calderwood, pp. 49-50; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to J. E. Huckins, 1 May 1928, p. 12190.

[47] *Moose Jaw Evening Times*, 28 October 1927; *Leader*, 5 June 1928; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, J. Anderson to Gardiner, n.d., pp. 12336-39.

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[48] C. Higginbotham, *Off the Record: The C.C.F. in Saskatchewan* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1968), p. 31.

[49] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, N. G. Calder to Gardiner, n.d., [August 1928], p. 12325.

[50] J. J. Maloney, *Rome in Canada* (Vancouver: Columbia Protestant Publications, n.d.), pp. 130-41. The other side of the story was that Maloney had spent "... a few months in the Seminary" but was refused further training owing to poor grades and financial irregularities. (AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to J. E. Brownlee, 28 February 1928, p. 12144.)

[51] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, L. C. Moyer to J. G. Gardiner, 8 February 1926, p. 111755.

[52] Maloney, pp. 144-53.

Employing such varied techniques as banquets, honorary memberships for clergymen and other influential persons, and of course rallies and cross-burnings, Rossborough, Hawkins, Maloney and a host of lesser lights doubled the number of Klaverns in the province, from approximately 61 in 1927 to 109 in 1928 and 125 in 1929. When Emmons and the Scotts left Saskatchewan the Klan's membership numbered some 13,000, according to one estimate, and was concentrated mainly in the southern part of the province. By the summer of 1928 there were as many Klaverns north of Regina and Moose Jaw as south, and by 1929 there were actually more. At the zenith of its popularity in Saskatchewan the Klan claimed to have 40,000 members; although 25,000 has been judged a more accurate estimate,[53] the growth of the Klan is still impressive, particularly when it is remembered that the membership of the S.G.G.A. at its peak had been no more than 35,000, and that the U.F.C. (S.S.) numbered barely 30,000 during the late 1920's.[54] It is impossible, of course, to estimate how many more joined the Klan in spirit, sympathizing with its stand on certain questions but not actually taking out a membership.

There seems little doubt that the original organizers of the Klan in Saskatchewan were motivated primarily by the prospect of pecuniary gain. Emmons was later said to have confessed that he and the Scotts had

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[53] Calderwood, pp. 80-82, 146.

[54] AS, S.G.G.A. Papers, *Convention Minutes*, 1921, p. 119; *Western Producer*, 14 July 1927.

> ... fed people "antis". Whatever we found that they could be taught to fear, we fed them. We were out to get the dollars and we got them.[55]

Some outside observers were quick to attribute the Klan's success to the gullibility of the Saskatchewan populace:

> That high-pressure American organizers, actuated by the prospect of obtaining money from the credulous, could enroll tens of thousands of ordinary decent citizens in an organization with a record such as that of the Klan in the United States is an illuminating sidelight on a people's mentality. Still more illuminating is it when one realizes that a large portion of the people of the province who have not joined the Klan have taken the movement so seriously as to cause it almost to be regarded as part and parcel of the social and political scheme of things.[56]

The crowds in attendance at Klan rallies and the numbers recruited by this secret organization suggest that there was more to the Klan's success than simply high-pressure salesmanship or the appeal of social companionship and the novelty of cross-burnings and white-sheeted parades, though the latter may certainly have served as a stimulus to its growth in Saskatchewan.[57]

Fear of change, it has been argued, was the underlying reason for the success of the Klan in the United States,[58] and to

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[55] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, clipping, *Canadian Jewish Review*, 15 June 1928, p. 13792.

[56] An Observer, "The Ku Klux Klan in Saskatchewan," *Queen's Quarterly*, Vol. XXXV, No. 5 (Autumn, 1928), p. 592.

[57] Calderwood, pp. 102-103, 117-18.

[58] Jackson, p. 242.

a considerable degree this seems also to hold true for Saskatchewan. The amalgam of patriotism, puritanical morality and appeals to law and order served up by Klan speakers offered security in a time of social and intellectual upheaval. Traditional Protestantism was under attack as more flexible liberal attitudes to the Bible and basic doctrine gained wider acceptance within the major denominations. The Klan's message was couched in phrases calculated to appeal to that segment of Protestantism which was vaguely uneasy about these new trends and craved a return to a simpler fundamentalism.[59]

J. H. Hawkins, for instance, informed a Regina audience in Feburary 1928 that "no man or woman unless they [*sic*] are prepared to accept the Christ who died on the Cross of Calvary can find room in our organization."[60] At another rally, in Yorkton, J. J. Maloney "... scored the modernistic tendency of some churches of today in their teachings, stating that they were getting away from the principles of Christianity as taught by its Founder."[61] This ultra-Protestantism clearly appealed to many Saskatchewan residents. It is impossible, of course, to document accurately the response of individual members of the various Protestant denominations, but an analysis of ministerial reactions to the Klan has shown that the more conservative and fundamentalist the church, the greater was the tendency of its clergy to endorse the Klan openly.[62]

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[59] The contrary currents sweeping Canadian Protestantism in the 1920's are discussed in J. W. Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era: The First Century of Confederation* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1972), pp. 121-35; Allen, *Social Passion*, pp. 148-312 *passim*.

[60] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, "Comprehensive Report of Meeting of the Ku Klux Klan, held in the City Hall, Regina, Thursday evening, Feb. 16, 1928," p. 12527.

[61] *Ibid.*, clipping, *Yorkton Enterprise*, 27 March 1928, p. 14076.

The apparent decline of public morality, as evidenced by the widespread flouting of prohibition and the revelations of wrongdoing in the federal Department of Customs and Excise may also have contributed to a feeling of unease in the minds of many Protestants. Here too the Klan's message was reassuring, for one of its declared aims was to "... strengthen the hands of all those whose duty it is to maintain law and order."[63] The Klan practiced what it preached not only in Moose Jaw but also, for instance, in Yorkton. In March 1928 it wrote to the municipal authorities there offering to lend its support in a campaign to "clean up our town":

> Yorkton in the past has been known throughout the West as the Flower Town of Saskatchewan .... But, coming to the point, Gentlemen: The real flowers of our City are our boys and girls. What are we doing to protect them? The noxious weeds are getting a foothold.

The letter then went on to charge that the proprietor of a local pool room had gambling devices on his premises, that liquor was being sold in a place other than the government store, and that there was a Chinese "den", and concluded with this stern admonition: "Gentlemen, it is near time to weed the garden, and don't have mercy on the weeds."[64]

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[62] Calderwood, pp. 179-91.

[63] *Saskatoon Star*, 23 June 1928.

There was another factor which contributed to the Klan's sudden and spectacular rise to prominence in Saskatchewan, namely the traditional Protestant suspicion of the Roman Catholic Church and its hierarchy. Twice before, during the first provincial election campaign and during the war years, religious harmony in Saskatchewan had been disrupted by a noisy agitation over denominational schools, and the issue emerged again in the latter half of the 1920's. The seeds of the controversy were present before the Klan appeared in the province, but it quickly seized the opportunity to manipulate the agitation to serve its own ends. The Klan made anti-Catholicism one of the cornerstones of its appeal in Saskatchewan, and much of its energy in the public sphere was directed toward combatting the sinister influence of Rome.

The agitation over what was thought to be undue sectarian interference in the public schools, which the Klan and its allies were able to build into a major political issue by 1928, had its roots in the amendments to the School Act approved by the first postwar session of the Legislature. Most Saskatchewan residents had accepted the compromise worked out during that session, and for a time the issue seemed dead. Such dissatisfaction as there was emanated chiefly from those districts where French Roman Catholics constituted the majority, and there was not a sufficiently large concentration of English-speaking Protestant ratepayers to organize a separate school. In such cases Protestant children were obliged to attend the public school, and this led to friction between Protestant and Catholic ratepayers. Members of religious orders taught in some French public schools and in a few instances the school was located in the local convent, an arrangement which also offended some Protestants.[65]

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[64] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, clipping, *Yorkton Enterprise*, 13 March 1928, p. 13473. Gardiner received a similar letter concerning Moose Jaw. (*Ibid.*, K.K.K. to Gardiner, 21 May 1927, p. 12030.)

The Orange Lodge, ever alert to any indication of growing Catholic power, was the first to seize upon the issue. The "menace" of sectarian influence in Saskatchewan public schools became a frequent theme in the Order's official newspaper, the *Sentinel and Orange and Protestant Advocate*. Favourable reports of Klan activities in other provinces began to appear in the *Sentinel* as early as 1923, and the Orange Lodge, with its long tradition of anti-Catholic and anti-French sentiment, played an important role in the Klan's eventual rise to prominence in Saskatchewan. Local meetings of the Order frequently featured Klansmen as guest speakers, Orange Halls were made available for Klan gatherings and membership in the two organizations overlapped.[66]

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[65] R. Huel, "The Teaching of French in Saskatchewan Public Schools: A Curious Infraction of the Provisions of the School Act in Ethier S.D. No. 1834, 1921-23," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (Winter, 1971), pp. 13-23.

[66] Calderwood, pp. 173-77. By 1928 the Saskatchewan branch of the Loyal Orange Lodge claimed a membership of some 36,000, second only to Ontario in all of the nation.

Another early and vigorous foe of clerical influence in the public schools was Rev. S. P. Rondeau, pastor of the United Church in Woodrow and a former Moderator of the Presbyterian Synod of Saskatchewan.[67] It was he who "exposed" the religious bias in certain French textbooks in a lengthy contribution to the *Sentinel* in April 1927, and complained that Protestant ratepayers in Gravelbourg had been unable to obtain redress of their grievances because the public school was "... hidden within the four walls of the convent."[68] Rondeau was one of twenty-six Protestant clergymen in Saskatchewan to join the Klan, and he soon became one of its most prominent lecturers, using the school issue as his special theme.[69] Other Klan spokesmen managed to attack both the new Catholic immigrants coming into the country under the Railways Agreement and the whole Catholic Church in the same speech. "Is Canada to remain a British country or a continental territory ruled by Rome?" J. H. Hawkins asked one Saskatchewan audience, warning that

> at the rate that continental Europeans are coming to this country at present, it will not be long before they will be the dominant class .... They live cheaply and can therefore underbid other labor, forcing the Canadian and Britisher out of work.

On the question of clerical influence in the public schools he announced that the Klan was

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[67] *Ibid.*, p. 181.

[68] *Sentinel and Orange and Protestant Advocate*, 7 April 1927.

[69] Calderwood, pp. 141, 180-81, 189-90; PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, S. P. Rondeau to Bennett, 25 May 1928, pp. 25095-98.

> not fighting against the public schools, but against the introduction into some of them, of Romish ideas and practices ...
>
> The Klan says that the schools should be free from sectarian influences, and that there should be one system of public schools throughout the Dominion ....[70]

The offensive against sectarian influence in Saskatchewan's public schools took other forms as well. In February 1928 a complaint was laid against the trustees of one school district alleging that they had permitted French to be used as a language of instruction beyond the first grade. The case attracted a good deal of publicity because the defendants sought to have the local magistrate disqualified on the grounds that, as a Klansman, he was biased. To defray their legal expenses the *A.C.F.C.* launched a province-wide appeal for funds, but while this case was still before the courts the trustees in a second school district found themselves charged with permitting French to be taught for more than the stipulated one hour per day. In yet another school district some ratepayers took matters into their own hands, broke into the school, and removed the crucifixes from the walls.[71]

In Saskatchewan, as in the United States, the Klan was able to find and feed upon racial prejudice and religious bigotry of long standing. Its message proved attractive to those concerned about the erosion of traditional Protestant values, or the "menace" of

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[70] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, clipping, *Yorkton Enterprise*, 5 June 1928, p. 13663.

[71] Huel, "A.C.F.C.," pp. 203-205.

sectarian influence in the public schools and unrestricted immigration from continental Europe. Throughout its existence in the province the Klan maintained that it was a nonpartisan and non-political organization,[72] but in fact the ballot early proved to be its most effective weapon. In the municipal elections in Moose Jaw in December 1927, for example, three of the five successful aldermanic candidates were Klan nominees. The following year the Klan placed one member on city council, and in 1929 Moose Jaw elected a Klansman as mayor.[73] Far more impressive was the Klan's impact in the provincial arena. So strongly did its message appeal to the latent prejudices of a large segment of the Saskatchewan electorate that provincial politics were polarized along new lines. Before the Klan's emotional crusade had run its course it undermined the loose coalition of Catholics, immigrants and moderate Protestants which had kept the Liberals in power since 1905.

Although the Klan at first maintained an official neutrality in provincial politics, its very presence in Saskatchewan and the political overtones that could be read into its activities soon made it an object of partisan manoeuvring. Premier Gardiner, for one, was quick to see that the Klan might prove useful to his opponents in the Legislature. As early as July 1927 he had sought to publicly link the Klan and the Progressives,[74] and a month later he elaborated his views in a letter to Mackenzie King. "There has been organized in the Province of Saskatchewan a Ku Klux Klan," he confided to the Prime Minister, its main object being "... to spread propaganda which will be of benefit to the opponents of the Government, both Provincial and Federal, at the time of the next election." Gardiner was not unduly alarmed by these developments, or by accusations that the Catholic Church controlled the governments at Ottawa and Regina:

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[72] *Kerrobert Citizen*, 20 June 1928; *Regina Daily Star* [hereafter cited as *Regina Star*] 23 October 1928.

[73] Calderwood, p. 262.

> I do not know that this [Klan] propaganda will do us any harm politically either from the Federal or Provincial point of view, as it seems to be rallying to its cause those who have been very rabid against us and at the same time the bitterness with which they attack the Roman Catholic Church will, in all probability, compel a great many to vote Liberal who would not do so otherwise.[75]

With this assessment of the situation King agreed, and advised the Saskatchewan Premier that "you cannot, I think, do a better thing than to expose as quickly and as completely as possible tactics such as those which your letter describes."[76]

Thus while relations between the Premier and the Klan remained cordial, he began gathering evidence on the hooded fraternity, going so far even as to engage detectives to investigate the background of the three original Klan organizers in Indiana.[77] It was not until the following January, though, that Gardiner made any further public reference to the Klan. In July 1927 he had simply pointed out the similarities between the techniques employed by the Klan to solicit memberships and those of the Nonpartisan League and the Progressives. During the early days of the 1928 session of the Legislature Gardiner went farther. He accused his opponents of calling upon all the forces in the province opposed to the government to fight the Liberals and endeavour to defeat them, and then went on to flay the Ku Klux Klan, which he claimed had left a trail of lawlessness and bloodshed wherever it had gone. At this point he was interrupted by E. S. Whatley, one of the Progressives opposite: "Are we to understand that the premier is trying to connect the K.K.K. with the Progressive party?" Gardiner replied:

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[74] *Supra*, pp. 658-59.

[75] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 23 August 1927, pp. 121723-24.

[76] *Ibid.*, King to J. G. Gardiner, 30 August 1927, pp. 121728-29.

> Just give me a little time. You will be quite illuminated by the time I get through ...
>
> I say to the Opposition in this house and anyone else that I, as leader of this government, do not want the support of that kind of an organization. If we cannot get government in this province without co-operation of that kind let us not have co-operation, or let us have no government at all in its present form. We in Canada have never found it necessary to get proper enforcement of law and order by having an organization parading about the country wearing hoods over their heads so that people do not know who they are. Any man who has not backbone and courage to stand out in the open has no place in British institutions of government.

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[77] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to C. Sutton, 25 January 1928, pp. 12042-43; Gardiner to Rev. F. M. Isserman, 27 February 1928, pp. 12130-31.

Dr. C. E. Tran, House leader of the Progressives, still professed not to be able to see the connection, and Gardiner went on:

> This is one of the groups in Saskatchewan apart from the two groups of my honorable friends opposite who are opposed to this government and if my honorable friends want any co-operation that is the only place I know that they can get it and when they are appealing to all the forces of this province opposing the government to get together in Saskatchewan to fight the forces of the Liberal Party, well, all I can say is that they will find those Liberal forces pretty much alive.[78]

The Premier had not specifically accused the Progressives, or the Conservatives either for that matter, of being in league with the Klan, but the Attorney-General was not as circumspect. During his contribution to the debate T. C. Davis made the claim that as the result of Dr. Anderson's leadership "half the Conservative party [was] skulking around in nightshirts."[79] Opposition M.L.A.'s, of course, were furious. They challenged the Premier and the Attorney-General to substantiate these allegations, but Davis replied only that they could "draw any inference they liked" from the remarks.[80]

Gardiner's fighting speech naturally pleased most Liberals while arousing the hostility of Klansmen. The *Leader* was quick to commend him for his "fearlessness in defying this organization ...

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[78] *Leader*, 31 January 1928.

[79] *Ibid.*, 1 February 1928.

[80] *Ibid.*, 1-2 February 1928.

[and] in rebuking any possible association with it ...."[81] The Klan as promptly invited Gardiner to be present at a public meeting in Regina at which his attack would be discussed and replied to, an invitation which the Premier chose to ignore.[82] Letters of congratulation praising his courageous stand poured into the Premier's Office,[83] but some observers suspected Gardiner's motives in attacking the Klan. The *Western Producer*, for instance, pointed out that the Klan had

> done nothing in Saskatchewan of an illegal or immoral nature, and until it does, attacks upon it must be based upon what it might do. Such attacks as those made by the premier might serve to attract attention to it and to enhance its popularity in some quarters. If the criticism was launched for the purpose of making it appear that all opposition to the provincial government was headed by or centred in the Klan, and that was the object of the speech, its delivery can hardly be commended. It would not be good for Saskatchewan if the Klan became a political issue. The chances of the Klan becoming such an issue were very remote until Mr. Gardiner spoke. Now those chances may be increased. However, if the premier did not like the Klan and believed it to be a menace, he had a right to say so, and perhaps it will clear the air ....[84]

The Premier's motives still remain something of a mystery.

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[81] *Ibid.*, 1 February 1928.

[82] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, C. B. Ellis to Gardiner, 10 February 1928, p. 12072; *Leader*, 17 February 1928.

[83] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, G. M. Manuel to Gardiner, 31 January 1928, pp. 8482-84; H. R. Schaller to Gardiner, 1 February 1928, p. 12051; J. D. Grant to Gardiner, 2 February 1928, p. 12053; M. A. Noel à Gardiner, 18 février 1928, p. 12127.

[84] *Western Producer*, 9 February 1928. A similar view may be found in AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, H. K. Kreutzwieser to Gardiner, 20 June 1928, p. 12260.

It may well be, as he declared to one correspondent who had written to offer his congratulations, that he simply believed "... that the proper thing for any one leading the Liberal Party to do is to come out boldly in defence of those who must look to Liberal principles for the protection of their rights."[85] On the other hand he could hardly have been unaware of the fact that a well-timed accusation of a link between his opponents and the Klan might pay political dividends. By this time the Liberals were convinced that the Klan was nothing more than "a branch of the Tory party,"[86] and not without good reason, as developments at the Conservative convention soon to be held in Saskatoon would make amply clear. Gardiner freely admitted in his correspondence and in the Legislature that the detectives hired by the government had completed their investigation of the Klan by the time Emmons and the Scotts disappeared from the province in the fall of 1927.[87] The fact that the Premier waited several months before openly condemning this organization and accusing his opponents of seeking its support suggests that the speech was also calculated to embarrass the Conservatives on the eve of their convention, and strengthen the government in the eyes of the province's sizeable Catholic and ethnic minorities.

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[85] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to J. H. McFadden, 17 February 1928, p. 12108.

[86] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, T. C. Davis to W. D. Euler, 25 January 1928, p. 129007.

[87] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to C. Sutton, 25 January 1928, pp. 12042-43; *Leader*, 31 January 1928.

There is, of course, ample evidence that some prominent Conservatives were members of the Klan, and that others sympathized with its objectives.[88] In fact, no one party had a monopoly on Klan membership. Progressives ran a close second to Conservatives in terms of Klan membership, for there were strains in the doctrine propounded by the Klan that struck a responsive chord among Progressives, strains that appealed to their religious, racial and anti-party prejudices.[89] Even some Liberal supporters succumbed to the emotional appeal of this secret organization. One student of the Klan has remarked that "the tradition of Canadian Liberalism carried with it enough of George Brown and Thomas Greenway for ... Liberals to feel no disloyalty in associating with the Klan."[90] And they were, as a school inspector and friend of the Premier informed Gardiner:

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[88] Dr. W. D. Cowan, a former Unionist M.P. and long-time Conservative, openly boasted of the fact that he was treasurer of the Klan. It was "... the most complete political organization ever known in the West. Every organizer in it is a Tory. It costs over a thousand dollars a week to pay them. I know it for I pay them. And I never pay a Grit." (PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, W. D. Cowan to Bennett, 16 January 1928, p. 24885.) Other Conservatives to join the Klan included Nathaniel Given of Delisle, J. A. Merkeley of Moose Jaw, W. W. Millar of Biggar and William Smith of Swift Current, all of whom were to be elected to the Legislature in 1929, and James Pascoe, an Independent-Conservative M.L.A., 1921-1925, and mayor of Moose Jaw in 1929. (Calderwood, p. 215, *Legislative Directory*, pp. 77-86.)

[89] Calderwood, pp. 223-24, 233-36. Among Progressives to join the Klan were Rev. A. J. Lewis, M.P. for Swift Current, 1921-1925, and Thomas Teare, once a member of the executive of the N.N.P.P.A. John Evans, Progressive M.P. for Saskatoon and then Rosetown, 1921-1930, addressed at least one Klan rally in Saskatoon.

[90] *Ibid.*, p. 210.

> As far as I can judge ... from discussions I hear two impressions prevail in regard to the Sask. Govt. One is that Roman Catholic influence is too great and the other is that for political reasons the [school] law is not being enforced. That is why the Klan is flourishing and some real good Protestant Liberals are members.[91]

J. H. Hawkins' boast that 65 per cent of Klan members and eight of the ten leading Klan officials belonged to the Liberal party[92] need not be taken seriously, but records of Klan membership do contain the names of some prominent Liberals, including the M.L.A. for Rosetown, J. A. Wilson.[93]

The precise number of Liberals who joined the Klan will never be known with certainty, but there is no reason to dispute the accepted view that Conservatives and Progressives were clearly in the majority among Klansmen. What has been overlooked, though, is the fact that within the ranks of both opposition parties were men who regarded as absolute folly all efforts to consort openly with the Klan and seek to profit from the racial and religious bigotry it preached. The strongest evidence of such a dichotomy is to be found in the Conservative party as it prepared for its biennial convention in Saskatoon in mid-March.

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[91] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, A. J. McCulloch to Gardiner, 18 March 1928, pp. 12177-78.

[92] *Leader*, 3 July 1928, 19 July 1928.

[93] Calderwood, p. 211. A partial undated list of Klan members in Saskatchewan, arranged by town, may be found in AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, pp. 12411-504. A second list, dated 8 June 1928, contains the names of the senior officials (Exalted Cyclops and Kligrapp) in each of the 109 Klaverns in the province at that time. (*Ibid.*, pp. 12505-508.)

That convention again confirmed J. T. M. Anderson as party leader, drafted the platform on which Conservatives would fight the next election and gave its approval to a resolution inviting the co-operation of all parties, groups and individuals opposed to the Gardiner regime.[94] The genesis of this resolution was to be found in a meeting which had taken place some ten days previous between Conservative and Progressive party officials for the purpose of avoiding three-cornered contests in the next election. At length a plan had been agreed upon whereby the Conservatives would

> run a ... candidate in certain constituencies (about fifty per cent) and have the Progressives run a candidate in each of the other constituencies where the Progressives were the strongest. If in any constituency neither the Progressive nor the Conservatives would accept any suggestions from the Central Committee, then an open convention would be called of all opposing the Government and the strongest man get the nomination.

At this same meeting a resolution had been drafted, to be introduced at the convention, inviting "... the Progressives and Labor to use their full strength to defeat the Liberal machine in Saskatchewan, in order that we may institute a co-operative Government in the Province ...." Once the resolution had been adopted, the support of each of the Progressive M.L.A.'s was to be canvassed, and all had supposedly agreed to wire their approval to the Conservative convention.[95] As it turned out the resolution was not approved by the delegates in Saskatoon until the convention had nearly ended, and it was not possible to carry out this plan in its entirety. Only Dr. C. E. Tran wired that he approved of the proceedings and was prepared to co-operate.[96]

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[94] *Saskatoon Star*, 15-16 March 1928.

[95] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 5 March 1928, pp. 24916-18.

J. F. Bryant was the driving force behind this proposal for what amounted to a "saw-off" with the Progressives. While some Conservatives were apparently uneasy about the prospect of collaborating with them, the resolution received near-unanimous support at the convention.[97] The party platform approved by the three hundred-odd Conservative delegates was also largely Bryant's work. He had consulted with the president and secretary of the Saskatchewan Progressives in drafting it, and informed R. B. Bennett that it

> ... embodied all the planks which we could conscientiously take from the Progressive platform, from Premier Bracken's platform in Manitoba, from the resolutions passed at the farmers [*sic*] convention, the conventions of the Rural Municipalities and the Trustees' convention during the last eight or ten years.[98]

There were the usual pledges that a Conservative government would follow a policy of economy and retrenchment and adhere to "sound business principles," foster the agricultural industry and press for the immediate transfer to Saskatchewan of the lands and natural resources bartered away in return for an inadequate federal subsidy in 1905. Denunciations of the Liberal "machine" were also much in evidence, as they had been at every Conservative gathering since the days of Haultain. This time the delegates approved a resolution calling for the appointment of all government employees by a civil service commission and recognition of the principle that "... selections shall be made on merit and efficiency, and not by reason of political affiliations ...." Another, requiring that all public works contracts in excess of $500 be awarded by public tender, also won the support of a majority of the delegates but a third, demanding that the Department of Highways be replaced by an independent commission free of political influence, was withdrawn.[99]

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[96] *Saskatoon Star*, 16 March 1928; PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 16 March 1928, pp. 24951-52.

[97] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, F. W. Mahon to Bennett, 6 March 1928, pp. 24922-23; J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 16 March 1928, p. 24952.

[98] *Ibid.*, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 16 March 1928, p. 24951.

Other planks were more attuned to the new issues that had arisen in Saskatchewan since the last provincial election. After J. T. M. Anderson had scored the Gardiner government for having no power policy, "just a mere vague statement about possibilities," the convention proceeded to commit the party to

> develop as a publicly owned and operated utility the generation of electrical energy from ... coal deposits and water powers for the use of the people of this province so soon as the population, wealth and industry of the province will warrant same being done in any given area and that in the meantime the power plants of the province be operated under rigid control and supervision of the government.[100]

The immigration plank was obviously calculated to attract the support of those who were uneasy about the unrestricted influx of continental Europeans. It called for an aggressive immigration policy, but one "based upon the selective principle." There would be greater co-operation with the British government to promote Empire settlement; immigrants would be chosen on the basis of their fitness and adaptability, and the needs of the different industries in the province; and special inducements would be offered to native Canadians to enable them to settle on Saskatchewan's vacant lands. Similarly, the resolutions on education had been drafted to appeal to the growing resentment among Protestants over clerical influence in the public schools. One resolution pledged a Conservative government to eliminate all textbooks with a denominational or patriotic bias, another to amend the School Act to "prohibit the use of any religious emblems in the public schools where there are pupils or ratepayers of mixed religious denominations and to prohibit the holding of the public school in buildings used for religious purposes except temporarily."[101] Leading officials of the Ku Klux Klan and the Orange Lodge were present at the convention, and J. F. Bryant was able to inform R. B. Bennett that these resolutions had "met with the entire approval of the Protestant organizations."[102]

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[99] *Saskatoon Star*, 16 March 1928.

[100] *Ibid.*, 15-16 March 1928.

The party executive regarded the convention as a "huge success,"[103] but some Conservatives viewed it in a rather different light. In the weeks that followed a number of Roman Catholics wrote to Bennett to object to the presence of Klansmen and Klan literature at the convention, and to the fact that not a single member of their faith had been elected to any of the executive positions in the party hierarchy. Two Catholics had been nominated for positions on a new advisory council, J. J. Leddy, a Saskatoon insurance agent, and A. G. MacKinnon of Regina. Leddy had been asked to withdraw, had refused, and was defeated on the floor of the convention, but MacKinnon had met a more mysterious fate. When the official list of nominees has been read to the delegates his name was missing and another's had been substituted.[104]

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[101] *Ibid.*, 15 March 1928.

[102] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 16 March 1928, p. 24954; *Western Producer*, 22 March 1928.

Alarmed by these reports, Bennett wrote to several prominent Saskatchewan Conservatives for clarification. Their responses serve to illustrate how the Klan both attracted and repelled members of that party. Many, including Anderson himself, saw nothing wrong in seeking to capitalize upon racial and religious bigotry as a means of gaining office. Indeed they blamed Premier Gardiner for introducing religion into provincial politics by his attack on the Klan in the Legislature and insisted that the Liberals were simply reaping what they had sown.[105] J. F. Bryant was particularly outspoken in this regard. "I have been in Saskatchewan since 1901," he wrote to Bennett, "and this is the first time since Saskatchewan became a Province that I have felt that we have a real chance of beating the Liberal party." Catholics in the province had not supported the Conservatives in the past, "... so that in my opinion we have lost no ground whatever through the fact that no Catholic was appointed to office."[106] As for the Klan, for whom Bryant had already acted as solicitor on a number of occasions, he pointed out that "they are ... going very strong and will be of great assistance in defeating the present Government, and I do not think that we should throw any stones at them any more than we should expect that the Liberals should throw stones at the Knights of Columbus or any other similar organization that is so strongly supporting them."[107]

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[103] PAC, R. B. Bennett, Papers, F. R. MacMillan to Bennett, 16 March 1928, pp. 24948-49.

[104] *Ibid.*, J. H. Hearn to Bennett, 28 March 1928, pp. 24987-90; A. G. MacKinnon to Bennett, 28 March 1928, pp. 25003-506; J. J. Leddy to Bennett, 28 March 1928, pp. 24992-93.

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[105] *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to Bennett, 27 March 1928, pp. 24967-70; same to same, 13 April 1928, p. 25022; F. R. MacMillan to Bennett, 7 May 1928, pp. 25056-57.

[106] *Ibid.*, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 11 April 1928, pp. 25014-15. As for the mysterious disappearance of MacKinnon's name from the list of nominees at the convention, Bryant claimed it had been done inadvertently in the dictating or typing of the list: "MacKinnon stated that the person who did this was Fred Somerville as he dictated the list of officers from a pencil memorandum to Dieffenbaker [*sic*] of Prince Albert who was running the typewriter and making the copy for the convention ... I approached Somerville and asked him if this was the case and he stated that it was not and that if any change had taken place it was in the typing."

[107] *Ibid.*, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 31 May 1928, p. 25113. Bryant's opinion was shared by others, who warned Bennett that Conservatives "... would be foolish not to profit by the Klan movement as the Conservative party does not owe any thanks to the Church for by it we have been kept in the opposition." (*Ibid.*, F. B. Reilly to Bennett, 14 April 1928, pp. 25025-26.)

Such extreme views were abhorrent to those moderate Protestants who, while admitting that "95% of the Catholics support the Liberals in the Province ...", regarded it as "... a calamity that a party with the traditions for fairness and square-dealing that our Party has should leave itself open to the suggestion if not the charge that we deliberately eliminated any man from our Councils because of his creed."[108] Such a course was "suicidal,"[109] and would doom the party at the next election:

> With forty per cent. of the people in this Province foreign-born and twenty-five per cent. Roman Catholic and the Conservative Party casting in its lot with only the Protestant English speaking people I cannot see much hope for us .... I am afraid we have fallen far short of the traditions of the old Conservative Party.[110]

The worst fears of this latter group seemed confirmed when "Pat" Emmons was arrested in Indianapolis, waived extradition and returned to Regina in early May to face charges of misappropriating Klan funds.[111] Emmons was to claim that he had returned to clear his name, but there were not a few in the province who thought otherwise, believing that he had been brought back to stand trial in order to embarrass the Klan, and was being paid by the Liberals to do so.[112] Emmons was acquitted of the charge, and a similar one laid against him in Moose Jaw, but during the course of his testimony he revealed that he had "... built this organization [the Ku Klux Klan] up as a Christian fraternal organization and then Dr. J. T. M. Anderson of Saskatoon, Dr. Smith of Moose Jaw and Dr. Cowan of Regina ... snatched it out of my hands."[113] Anderson and Cowan responded with prompt denials, and more than ever Conservatives became convinced that Premier Gardiner was using the former Klan organizer for political purposes.[114] Emmons subsequently announced his intention to "expose" the inner workings of the Klan at a public meeting in Regina.[115] It took place at the end of the month, when before an overflow audience in the City Hall he produced affidavits again alleging that leading Conservatives, including Dr. Anderson, were connected with the Ku Klux Klan.[116] His accusations were eagerly repeated by the Liberal press.[117] Anderson again promptly denied them,[118] but even Bryant privately confessed that

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[108] *Ibid.*, M. A. MacPherson to Bennett, 7 April 1928, pp. 24997-98.

[109] *Ibid.*, W. J. Perkins to Bennett, 23 May 1928, pp. 25074-76.

[110] *Ibid.*, J. A. M. Patrick to Bennett, 21 April 1928, p. 25037.

[111] *Leader*, 18 February 1928, 4 May 1928.

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[112] *Ibid.*, 8 May 1928; Higginbotham, pp. 29-31.

[113] *Leader*, 7-8 May 1928, 10-11 May 1928.

[114] *Ibid.*, 10 May 1928; *Western Producer*, 17 May 1928; PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, M. A. MacPherson to Bennett, 14 May 1928, pp. 25065-66; F. W. Turnbull to Bennett, 29 May 1928, pp. 25103-105.

[115] *Leader*, 28 May 1928.

[116] *Ibid.*, 31 May 1928.

[117] *Moose Jaw Evening Times*, 31 May 1928; *Saskatoon Star*, 31 May 1928.

> I do not like the look of these affidavits. I had no idea that Dr. Anderson had so little discretion.
>
> If the statements contained in the affidavits are true he has certainly placed the Party both in Saskatchewan and throughout Canada in a very difficult position. You can rest assured that the leading Conservatives are not mixed up with the Klan in Saskatchewan, outside of Dr. W. D. Cowan.[119]

Anderson assured Bennett that "the charge that is being made by one Emmons that I was responsible for trying to get this organization into politics is a lie of the worst kind and statements and affidavits in the course of preparation will prove this to the satisfaction of all."[120] Although the federal leader urged Anderson that it was "... very important that you should make it clear that you are not a member of the Klan" no affidavits ever appear to have been taken or published, and Bryant and Anderson continued to seek to make political capital out of the immigration and school issues.[121]

If Conservatives held conflicting views on the question of openly associating with the Klan and seeking to profit from the racial and religious bigotry it preached, so did Progressives. A fuller understanding of the complexity of their response to the Klan, and to the related issue of collaboration with the Conservatives, has been facilitated by a recent study of the social and political roots of Saskatchewan Progressivism. There were really three distinct elements within the party: a Liberal partisan group alienated from its federal counterpart by the tariff and other issues, former Provincial Righters or Conservatives who had drifted into the Progressive fold after the war and "an English and generally Anglican non-partisan element whose formative influences placed them beyond allegiance to either established party in the province."[122] The defection of Charles Agar and George Cockburn to the Liberals meant that this first group ceased to have any real influence. Neither of the remaining elements was able to completely dominate the councils of the Progressive party after 1927, and it became "... an incoherent body without any central control ...."[123] Some Progressives turned toward the more doctrinaire theories of Progressivism and advocated group government while others began to look more sympathetically toward the Conservative party.

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[118] *Leader*, 1 June 1928.

[119] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 31 May 1928, p. 25113.

[120] *Ibid.*, J. T. M. Anderson to Bennett, 4 June 1928, p. 25123.

[121] *Ibid.*, Bennett to J. T. M. Anderson, 20 June 1928, p. 25129; *Leader*, 4 July 1928; *Regina Star*, 18 August 1928.

The Ku Klux Klan acted as a catalyst, in the sense that its message proved attractive to those Progressives who were suspicious of the central European immigrant and the Roman Catholic Church, but without the rise of former Provincial Righters and Conservatives like Dr. C. E. Tran and Dr. Reginald Stipe to positions of influence within the Progressive party the link with Anderson might never have been consummated. It was these two men who had negotiated the arrangement for a "saw-off" with the Conservatives in March 1928,[124] and the influence of the Provincial Rights-Conservative element was very much in evidence at the annual Progressive convention later that summer. In addition to the traditional resolutions favouring political reforms of various kinds, a civil service commission free from political partisanship and "strict economy in government administration, consistent with efficiency" new phrases found their way into the Progressive platform, such as "freedom of our public schools from sectarian influence" and "an immigration policy which will insure the permanency of British institutions and ideals, combined with a scientific scheme of land settlement."[125] It was not only the Klan, of course, which drew Progressives and Conservatives closer together. Both could also agree on the desirability of ending the political corruption associated with the Liberal "machine", for both had felt its full force at election time.

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[122] Courville, p. 19.

[123] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. J. Leddy to Bennett, 17 April 1928, p. 25030.

Still, co-operation of the kind foreshadowed at the Conservative convention in Saskatoon was bound to be difficult, for not all Progressives favoured the idea of openly associating with the Conservative party or the Klan. Many, such as E. S. Whatley, the M.L.A. for Kindersley, found the Klan repugnant. When Premier

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[124] *Ibid.*

[125] *Saskatoon Star*, 20 June 1928.

Gardiner had attempted in January 1928 to establish a link between the Klan and the two opposition groups in the Legislature, Whatley had been quick to declare that "any organization that attempted ... stirring up religious and racial hatred and animosity had no place in Saskatchewan."[126] Another who refused to have anything to do with this secret organization was M. J. Coldwell, a Regina school principal and alderman and member of the provincial executive of the Progressive party.[127] For Progressives such as Whatley and Coldwell the prospect of collaboration with a Conservative party tainted by association with the Klan could hardly be appealing.

An old-fashioned political "saw-off" with the Conservatives would be no more attractive to those Progressives who had become enamoured with the theories of Henry Wise Wood. C. E. Little, president of the provincial Progressives, was openly touting the possibility of a Conservative-Progressive coalition a week before their convention in Saskatoon,[128] but he could not speak for the party as a whole. Instead that convention reaffirmed the Progressive commitment to "... the fullest measure of constituency autonomy in the selection of a candidate on a basis of group organization" and rejected "... any arrangement with either the Liberal or Conservative political parties in the selection of a candidate or the conducting of an election."[129] In some ridings, Milestone for example, Progressives and Conservatives did proceed to nominate joint candidates, but in others local Progressives eschewed all entanglements, preferring instead to "... take political action as an economic group looking forward to the acceptance of this principle by the U.F.C. (S.S.), and to the establishment of a co-operative government."[130]

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[126] *Leader*, 1 February 1928.

[127] W. D. Young, "M. J. Coldwell, the Making of a Social Democrat," *Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. IX, No. 3 (August, 1974), p. 58.

[128] *Leader*, 13 June 1928.

The open courting of Klan support at the Conservative convention in Saskatoon strengthened Premier Gardiner's conviction that it had become a political instrument directed against his government. Nevertheless he remained confident that it was the Liberals who would derive the greatest political benefit from the activities of the Klan,[131] the more so after Emmons' revelations in Regina and Moose Jaw. To one party supporter in Rosetown he observed:

> The trial in Regina last Monday and the one which is now going on in Moose Jaw has, I think, very well proven every remark which I made in the Legislature last session.
>
> Anderson, Dr. Cowan and Bryant all have letters in the paper this morning which only demonstrate their close connection with the Klan. They have not denied anything of material importance which was said by Emmons and, of

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[129] *Western Producer*, 21 June 1928.

[130] *Regina Star*, 18 August 1928; *Western Producer*, 26 July 1928, 29 November 1928.

[131] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to M. McLean, 12 March 1928, p. 12150.

> course, are now blaming the Government for bringing Emmons back ...
>
> Judging from comment which I have heard both in Saskatoon and Regina, I think their little plan to involve the Province in a religious political war, will be very detrimental to them.[132]

To another Liberal he was more candid: "By the time we are through with [Anderson], I do not think he will be able to squirm out of the position which he has got himself into."[133]

In June the Premier addressed a series of meetings across the province, denouncing the Klan and warning voters that it was being used by Anderson and the Conservatives for political purposes.[134] Before country audiences, and before the Saskatchewan Conference of the United Church Gardiner attempted to calm Protestant fears about sectarian influence in the public schools. The objectionable passages had been deleted from the French readers authorized for use in the province and the Department of Education was making every effort to find a new series. In only eight or ten of Saskatchewan's 4,776 school districts were Protestant children attending Catholic public schools, and it was the government's policy to discourage the display of religious symbols in schools where complaints had been made.[135] At other meetings he produced figures from the 1921 and 1926 census reports to refute the charge so often made by Bishop Lloyd and by Klan speakers that Saskatchewan was being swamped by immigrants from central and eastern Europe.[136] As for the accusation that Catholics dominated the government and were able to get whatever they wanted from it, he quoted more statistics to show that "... with a population of which approximately 20 per cent is Roman Catholic we have a Civil Service in which the Roman Catholic employees constitute about 13 per cent."[137]

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[132] *Ibid.*, Gardiner to S. Moyer, 10 May 1928, p. 12197.

[133] *Ibid.*, Gardiner to T. F. Waugh, 15 May 1928, p. 12209.

[134] *Leader*, 2 June 1928.

[135] *Ibid.*, 5 June 1928; *Battleford Press*, 14 June 1928.

The highlight of Gardiner's speaking tour was a well-publicized debate with J. H. Hawkins which took place in the Premier's own home town of Lemberg at the end of June.[138] The Klan had been eager for a debate with Gardiner since February, when their first challenge had been ignored. A second challenge, early in June, met a similar fate.[139] Two weeks later, in Rosetown, J. H. Hawkins interrupted one of Gardiner's meetings to propose a debate in the Premier's own constituency. This time Gardiner agreed,[140] and came away from the debate convinced that Hawkins had been "fairly well floored."[141] Indeed the Premier believed that the whole speaking tour had dealt the Klan a death blow and further strengthened the Liberal party across the province.[142] Other Liberals were not so certain. After Gardiner had addressed a meeting in Wapella, a local Liberal wrote to offer his impressions:

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[136] *Saskatoon Star*, 22 June 1928.

[137] *Leader*, 1 June 1928.

[138] *Moose Jaw Evening Times*, 30 June 1928; *Leader*, 3 July 1928.

[139] *Leader*, 5 June 1928.

[140] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. F. Bryant to Bennett, 20 June 1928, pp. 25159-60; *Leader*, 21 June 1928.

> With regard to the Wapella meeting I would say that there were quite a few from this district attended and were highly pleased, but unfortunately the one [*sic*] who attended were those who needed your address the least, that is, they were all sound supporters of the Liberal Government, and those who are not so minded remained at Rocanville and listened to Mr. Puckering of the Ku-Klux-Klan the same night.[143]

A Kerrobert Liberal also admitted to the Premier that "feeling is rather high here and ... about all I can do is to keep Liberals from wavering and we may as well admit there are quite a number."[144]

Gardiner's patient defence of the government's record did not silence the Klan and its political allies. Some have judged that his defensive attitude contributed to the Liberals' demise in 1929,[145] but his response to the storm of criticism directed against his government was entirely in keeping with his own early political experience in Saskatchewan. It must be remembered that Gardiner had first entered the Legislature in June 1914,[146] just as the controversy over the teaching of German, Ruthenian and other "foreign" languages was about to inflame the province. While he was still a back-bencher J. E. Bradshaw's now famous charges of graft, bribery and corruption had shaken the government to its foundations. An appeal for tolerance and fair play, coupled with a vigorous defence of the Liberal's record in punishing those guilty of wrongdoing, had brought the party through both crises. When his own government came under fire it was natural for Gardiner to meet the challenge in a way that had proven successful in the past. In 1905, of course, the Liberals had not relied solely on reason and logic to meet criticism of the autonomy terms. Premier Scott had also urged the federal government to facilitate the construction of urgently needed railway lines in the province to "... take people's eyes off the school question",[147] and there is every reason to suspect that the farm loan scheme was introduced on the eve of the 1917 election for a similar purpose. What Gardiner needed was some new accomplishment that would "take people's eyes off the school question" and Liberals were looking to the Power Resources Commission to provide it.

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[141] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to N. Calder, 30 June 1928, p. 12295.

[142] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 7 June 1928, pp. 129769-70; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to T. E. Gamble, 29 June 1928, p. 9411.

[143] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, J. A. Thompson to Gardiner, 25 June 1928, p. 9410.

[144] *Ibid.*, E. B. Hutcherson to Gardiner, 20 June 1928, p. 12288.

[145] Kyba, pp. 37-42, 97-100; Unger, pp. 108-20.

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[146] *Legislative Directory*, p. 126.

[147] PAC, Wilfrid Laurier Papers, W. Scott to Laurier, 18 October 1905, p. 102268.

Early in March the Commission received the final report from the consulting engineers, a report which strongly supported their earlier findings in favour of a central generating plant serving the three cities.[148] Not wishing to act until the Commission had drawn up its recommendations, the Premier and his colleagues remained silent on the power question for two months, much to the dismay of staunch champions of public ownership like the *Western Producer*.[149] When the government finally announced its intention to meet with Regina, Moose Jaw and Saskatoon to discuss concrete proposals for power development, even the *Leader* was moved to observe with a sense of relief that

> The proposed conference should permit of getting down to business on the power question. This is what the people have a right to look for. The municipalities can do much, but the Government must furnish an aggressive lead ... Boldness, fearlessness, and enterprise are what the people of Saskatchewan have a right to expect of the Provincial Administration in all matters bearing upon power development. It is time to get off to a substantial and enduring start.[150]

There seems little doubt that the proposals made at that conference, which took place in Regina on 16 May, reflected the conclusions reached by the Power Resources Commission after nearly eighteen months of investigation.[151] The government indicated to the cities that it was prepared to build a central generating plant and high capacity transmission lines to supply power to Regina, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and surrounding country points, and operate the existing municipally-owned plants in the three cities as stand-by units. Here, in bare outline, was the basis for a comprehensive power scheme, but almost at once the government's plans began to go awry. The city representatives withdrew from the conference to discuss the proposals among themselves, and when they returned in the afternoon they gave it as their opinion that

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[148] White, pp. 95-99.

[149] *Western Producer*, 3 May 1928, 10 May 1928.

[150] *Leader*, 11 May 1928.

[151] White, pp. 99-100.

> ... the scheme of pool production of power should first receive further consideration at the hands of the Power Commission, and that their report should deal, not only with central power production, but also with the utilization of the present civic plants for supply of power to outside points.[152]

The government held back, realizing full well that any power scheme would founder without the co-operation of the major centres, and the report of the Power Resources Commission, which the cities had been given to understand would be ready within two weeks, was in fact not to be completed for another seven.[153]

This further delay brought more criticism, from the Union of Saskatchewan Municipalities, for instance, which at its annual convention in Moose Jaw urged the government to "[adopt] ... a policy at the earliest possible date, looking to the inauguration of a province-wide system of electrical distribution."[154] The *Leader*, as well, continued to warn that the continued acquisition of municipal plants by private power companies would "... endanger the whole public ownership enterprise which most people in the province want to see embarked upon with the least possible delay" and wondered aloud whether the seriousness of the situation was "properly appreciated by the 'powers that be'."[155]

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[152] *Leader*, 17 May 1928.

[153] White, pp. 99, 101-103; *Leader*, 1 June 1928.

The Premier and his colleagues were only too painfully aware of the fact that with each passing week came news of the sale of yet another municipal power plant or the commencement of negotiations with one of the several private firms operating in the province.[156] It was the situation in Saskatoon which caused the greatest concern. Demand there would soon outstrip the capacity of the municipal plant and the city council was being wooed by two private companies, Dominion Electric and Calgary Power. If Saskatoon sold its plant, the government's plan to link the three cities as the nucleus of a province-wide power scheme would have to be abandoned.[157] Moreover the Conservatives were making the most of the Saskatoon situation, and had succeeded in creating something of a political issue in that city.[158] Thus it was with a sense of urgency that George Spence wrote a holidaying Premier Gardiner at Banff on 10 July as the Power Resources Commission was putting the finishing touches to its report:

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[154] *Leader*, 23 June 1928.

[155] *Ibid.*, 25 June 1928.

[156] White, pp. 118-19.

[157] *Ibid.*, pp. 102, 118, 126-29.

> Mayor Norman [of Saskatoon] phoned me today and said that the situation in Saskatoon is becoming more unbearable every day. They are having another Council meeting on Thursday and they would like to have something definite by that time ...
>
> Mayor Norman is fighting the Tories with his back up against a stone wall and relying on us for help ... I am wiring Norman to meet me at the train to-morrow in Saskatoon and I will discuss the matter with him and stand him off as long as I can; but, believe me, the situation is rapidly becoming unbearable.[159]

The final report of the Power Resources Commission, dated 12 July 1928, was put in the government's hands as soon as it was completed, and while it would not be made public for another ten days, Saskatoon was assured that the government would shortly be taking action on the power question.[160] In fact, the original findings of the Power Resources Commission had been reshaped to fit that city's requirements exactly. To ensure that Saskatoon and the other major centres would participate, the government and the Commission had changed plans when the first difficulties had begun to appear in mid-May. In its final report the Commission reversed its earlier conclusions and declared that a large central generating plant would be economically impractical for years to come. Instead it recommended that the three municipal plants be enlarged to form the basis of a provincial power system.[161] These new proposals won ready approval in Saskatoon, but elsewhere they created almost as many objections as they removed. The provincial government quietly began negotiations to acquire the Saskatoon plant, but in Regina the recommendations of the Power Resources Commission were not at all warmly received, and in Moose Jaw the city council seemed on the verge of turning its utility over to a private concern.[162]

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[158] *Leader,* 1 June 1928; *Saskatoon Star,* 2 June 1928.

[159] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, G. Spence to Gardiner, 10 July 1928, pp. 6979-80.

[160] *Leader,* 13 July 1928.

As might have been expected, the Conservatives were also critical of the recommendations of the Power Resources Commission. J. T. M. Anderson announced in a newspaper interview that no action ought to be taken until the Legislature had had an opportunity to give them close scrutiny, and that it was his "firm conviction" that a central generating plant ought to be built in close proximity to the Souris coal fields to form the nucleus of any provincial power system.[163] The new Conservative newspaper in Regina, which had begun publication only a few days before, was even more caustic. The *Regina Daily Star* dismissed the report as an "ill-considered and ill-thought out plan," one that would never receive the approval of the major cities, and concluded that "the whole purpose of the scheme is undoubtedly to provide an election cry for the fight which may come at any time now."[164]

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[161] Saskatchewan, *Report of Saskatchewan Power Resources Commission* (Regina: King's Printer, 1928). For a detailed exposition of how the Commission reversed its conclusions, see White, pp. 102-23, 540-54.

[162] White, pp. 125, 129-42.

[163] *Regina Star*, 23 July 1928.

The Conservatives had been convinced for months that the Premier intended to call a provincial election before the end of the summer.[165] Gardiner had of course issued the customary denials,[166] but in fact he did not think the time was propitious. A by-election, though, was another matter. It could be the culmination of the battle against the Klan, particularly since that organization had taken as strong a hold in the riding in question -- Arm River -- as in any part of the province.[167]

The Liberals may also have hoped that a by-election would provide an opportunity to win a greater measure of support for the recommendations of the Power Resources Commission and permit them to make a major policy announcement on the subject. Premier

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[164] *Ibid.* For a detailed account of the circumstances which led to the establishment of this newspaper see Brennan, "Press and Party," pp. 88-89.

[165] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, F. Wright to Bennett, 1 March 1928, p. 24915; W. M. Aseltine to Bennett, 17 April 1928, pp. 46777-78; J. T. M. Anderson to Bennett, 26 April 1928, p. 25043; M. A. MacPherson to Bennett, 14 May 1928, p. 25065.

[166] *Leader*, 29 May 1928, 31 May 1928.

[167] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to J. F. Johnston, 18 June 1928, p. 8810. The sitting member, George Scott, had resigned his seat in the Legislature to accept a position with the federal government.

Gardiner informed the Liberal nominating convention at Craik that his government was "confronted with the question as to whether or not the province should apply to the provision of power the same principles as underlay the success of the telephone system, or whether we should permit the whole province to fall into the hands of the power trust of the United States or the ownership of eastern private interests."[168] The *Leader* took its cue from the Premier and warned its readers after the campaign had got underway in Arm River that a Liberal victory would serve as a rebuke to "... interests ... who would destroy the important and promising publicly-owned power scheme which the Government has in mind and supplant it by a monopolistic grip by private corporations ...."[169] In his speeches across the riding Gardiner made much of the progress of the negotiations with Saskatoon, and pledged that as soon as an agreement was signed the House would be summoned to consider legislation establishing a power commission for the province.[170]

The rhetoric was reminiscent of earlier Liberal campaigns when Scott and Calder had posed as the champions of the province against the "big interests" of eastern Canada, but Gardiner's statements on the power question failed to silence his Conservative critics. J. T. M. Anderson termed the government's power policy

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[168] *Leader*, 18 August 1928.

[169] *Ibid.*, 2 October 1928.

[170] *Ibid.*, 18 August 1928, 4 October 1928.

"a sham and a fake" and accused it of insincerity in dealing with this important question. For months it had stood idly ~~by,~~ allowing towns and villages to sell their plants to private companies and issuing permits to those same companies to construct more than 1,000 miles of transmission lines in Saskatchewan, but now the government was posing as the defender of provincial interests against the rapacious American power companies.[171] It might have been expected that the Premier would counter these attacks by providing more details concerning his plans for establishing a provincial power scheme. He did not, for the government seems to have been determined to wait until it was almost certain a major city would accept its proposals before doing so.[172] Though the Saskatoon negotiations were proceeding favourably, an agreement would not be ratified until 22 November,[173] nearly a month after the date of polling in Arm River.

Public power was soon lost sight of in the welter of charges that made the Arm River fight the bitterest in years. Anderson's disclaimer that "we do not aim to ride into office on appeals to racial and religious prejudice ...."[174] was ignored even by the leader himself, as Conservatives continued to assert that the government was permitting sectarian influences to gain a foothold in the public schools. At one meeting Anderson accused the Premier of "political cowardice" for not ordering the removal of religious emblems from classrooms in which there were children of mixed beliefs, and at others J. F. Bryant freely predicted that "... within five years or ten at the most under present political conditions, Roman Catholics will be in the majority in Saskatchewan, and the French will control the political destinies of Quebec, Saskatchewan and all of Canada."[175] The continued influx of central and eastern Europeans also received a good deal of attention at Conservative meetings and in the editorial columns of the *Regina Daily Star*, which warned ominously that

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[171] *Regina Star*, 10 October 1928.

[172] White, p. 126.

[173] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

[174] *Regina Star*, 20 October 1928.

> The biological fact that the intermixing of the nationalities will eventually degrade the character of the people is being overlooked, and the utmost indifference is being shown to the ousting of native born and British settlers from employment .... In the long run Canada will suffer for it, just as the United States is today suffering as a consequence of its indiscriminate policy of immigration.[176]

The Liberals insisted that immigration was a federal responsibility and had no place in a provincial by-election,[177] but this did not deter J. F. Bryant from claiming that the Gardiner government was in league with the French Catholic ministers at Ottawa and the Catholic hierarchy to keep out British immigrants and flood

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[175] *Ibid.*, 10 October 1928, 12 October 1928, 16 October 1928.

[176] *Ibid.*, 19 October 1928.

[177] *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 4 October 1928, 8 October 1928.

Saskatchewan with unassimilable foreigners.[178] Even the age-old question of provincial control of natural resources became enmeshed in religion. Audiences at Conservative meetings were informed that these had been withheld in 1905 as a guarantee that the minority's right to separate schools would not be interfered with, and that a Liberal government could never be depended upon to secure the return of Saskatchewan's rightful heritage.[179]

The Conservatives also continued to assail the "pap-fed political machine"[180] built up by the Liberals during their twenty-three years in office. The old road and liquor scandals of 1916 were unearthed as proof of the evils of the "machine." Voters in Arm River were told that Saskatchewan's roads were still "all graft and no gravel," and an independent audit of every department at Regina was promised if the Conservatives formed the government after the next election.[181] It was Conservative revelations of more recent wrongdoing, or alleged wrongdoing, which provided the major interest of the by-election campaign. In his first speech in the riding Anderson charged that the brewers and distillers contributed heavily to the Liberal party in Saskatchewan and that firms doing business with the government were expected to do likewise.[182] The Conservatives repeated and elaborated their accusations as the campaign progressed. M. A. MacPherson claimed at another meeting that wealthy bootleggers in Regina had made millions out of the illegal sale of liquor, and that the Gardiner government was afraid to prosecute one of them, Harry Bronfman, even though the inquiry into the 1926 customs scandal had recommended that charges be brought against him.[183] A few days later J. F. Bryant described in detail to a Conservative audience how for years firms had not been able to sell liquor to the government unless they were on the patronage list, which meant appointing a Liberal as their agent and contributing to the party's coffers. He gave the names of alleged contributors and warned that any denials by the Premier would be of no avail, "... because the Conservative party, and some of his erstwhile Liberal friends have information that would give him and certain other prominent Liberals the cold shivers."[184]

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[178] *Regina Star*, 24 October 1928.

[179] *Ibid.*, 10 October 1928, 19 October 1928.

[180] *Ibid.*, 30 July 1928.

[181] *Ibid.*, 5 October 1928, 19 October 1928, 23 October 1928.

It was Bryant, too, who charged that two provincial highways inspectors, "Archie" McCallum and J. G. Cameron, and an official of the government's liquor board had taken part in the Manitoba provincial election campaign in 1927, and demanded to know whether they had received their normal civil service salaries and expenses while they were engaged in political work there.[185] The recent trials of "Pat" Emmons in Regina and Moose Jaw were not forgotten either, as Conservatives accused the Gardiner government of abusing the courts to serve its own partisan ends.[186] The charge which caused the greatest sensation concerned election irregularities in Happyland, where the ballot boxes had been stuffed, so the Conservatives claimed, to ensure the victory of the government candidate in the 1925 provincial election. Here was a dramatic example, they argued, of how the Liberals had "wilfully violated the principles of British fair play and the sacredness of the ballot", and Anderson challenged the Premier to appoint an independent committee to investigate.[187]

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[182] *Ibid.*, 5 October 1928.

[183] *Ibid.*, 11 October 1928.

[184] *Leader*, 17 October 1928.

The Liberals responded to this barrage of charges by defending their record in administering the province's affairs. Gardiner continued to insist that the Conservatives had exaggerated the difficulties being experienced in some of the Catholic public schools, and that there had not been an increase in the foreign-born population of Saskatchewan, quoting an impressive array of statistics to prove his point.[188] Liberals insisted that it was their opponents who were responsible for stirring up racial and religious animosity in the province, and reminded voters that J. T. M. Anderson had never denied the affidavits linking him with the Ku Klux Klan.[189] As for the Conservative insinuations of partisanship in the civil service and political favouritism in the granting of government contracts, the Premier at first simply dismissed them as "absolutely ridiculous."[190] As the campaign progressed, though, Gardiner became convinced that the inspiration for the Conservative attacks against his government was coming from George Bell and Stan Ross, and decided to reveal the history of his long feud with those two men.[191] This he did at a meeting at Loreburn, at which he declared that his government would "... never permit an outside body to build up a ring, to demand business or anything else."[192]

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[185] *Regina Star*, 23 October 1928.

[186] *Ibid.*, 5 October 1928, 18 October 1928.

[187] *Ibid.*, 5 October 1928, 9 October 1928, 16 October 1928.

[188] *Leader*, 4 October 1928, 12 October 1928, 22 October 1928.

The accusation that the government was afraid to prosecute Harry Bronfman proved more difficult to dispose of. It was the responsibility of the federal authorities to initiate proceedings against him, T. C. Davis declared. The chief witness for the Crown had been seriously ill for some months and this had caused an unfortunate delay, but prosecutions had been ordered and would be

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[189] *Ibid.*, 18 October 1928, 24 October 1928.

[190] *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 6 October 1928.

[191] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to C. A. Dunning, 29 October 1928, p. 8838.

[192] *Leader*, 22 October 1928. A more complete statement of Gardiner's version of the feud with Bell appeared in the *Leader* and other daily newspapers in the province next day.

"carried through to the end."[193] Undeterred, the Conservatives replied that the witness was in fact perfectly healthy and produced a telegram from a prominent Winnipeg lawyer and member of the Manitoba legislature as proof. "One of two things has happened in the Bronfman case," M. A. MacPherson declared a week before Arm River voters went to the polls, "either the Gardiner Government is not taking steps to prosecute Bronfman ... or else the Dominion Government is withholding or delaying prosecution in order to convenience the Gardiner Government."[194]

Similarly, in the case of the Happyland charges, the government found itself on the defensive. Early in the campaign Gardiner pointed out that the defeated candidate, a Progressive named Thomas Baldwin, had inspected certain of the poll books after the election but had not seen fit to make any official protest. Neither had the Leader of the Opposition raised the matter in the Legislature, though he had had ample opportunity to do so. The Premier nevertheless promised that if Anderson could provide any evidence to show that the sitting member for Happyland should be unseated, "... he need have no fear as to what will happen."[195] This forthright declaration seemed to settle the matter, but it quickly revived when Baldwin announced in a letter to the newspapers that he had informed S. J. Latta of the irregularities in the taking of the vote in Happyland two months after the election, and that no action had been taken to punish the offenders since that time.[196] The Conservatives eagerly seized the advantage and quoted the letter at their meetings for the remainder of the campaign.[197]

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[193] *Ibid.*, 16 October 1928.

[194] *Regina Star*, 19 October 1928.

[195] *Leader*, 6 October 1928, 13 October 1928.

Apart from their defence of their record, the Liberal campaign in Arm River was a lacklustre affair. Cabinet ministers swarmed over the riding as they had in every by-election since the days of Dunning,[198] but they seemed always to be one step behind their opponents, denying Conservative charges rather than maintaining the initiative. The Liberal candidate, Dr. T. F. Waugh, did emerge the victor when the ballots were counted on 25 October, but he won by only 59 votes in a straight two-way fight. It was a far cry from the acclamation George Scott had received in the riding in 1921 or his majority of 308 in 1925.[199] Premier Gardiner nevertheless considered the victory "... one of the most important we have ever had in a by-election in view of the fact that we were opposed by Conservatives, the K. K. K. and the disgruntled element in our party ... who were dissatisfied because they could not hold the

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[196] *Regina Star*, 19 October 1928.

[197] *Ibid.*, 20 October 1928.

[198] *Ibid.*, 6 October 1928; *Western Producer*, 11 October 1928.

[199] *Legislative Directory*, p. 91.

Government up in connection with certain government business."[200] Looking to the future, he commented to a Liberal supporter in Estevan that "perhaps the greatest benefit which the by-election brought to us was the production of every charge, every argument and every device that the opposition could possibly conceive of to assist them in a general election, with the result that we can proceed to prepare ourselves accordingly."[201]

Gardiner was convinced that the Klan and the Conservatives had worked closely together in Arm River, and that this was largely responsible for the narrowness of Waugh's victory.[202] Liberals had to admit that "the Scandinavian people were stampeded by the K.K.K." and that "... the German vote, which in that Riding is strongly Lutheran, voted Tory for the first time ...."[203] The result in Arm River notwithstanding, Gardiner was confident that the Liberals would have nothing to fear from the Klan. It was making very little progress in the province, and in many places had "... absolutely ceased to function."[204] His opinion was shared by others, including the *Leader*,[205] but some Liberals were not so confident. Andrew Haydon, for one, concluded after the Arm River result was known that the Premier had been

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[200] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to O. H. Peacock, 1 November 1928, p. 8891.

[201] *Ibid.*, Gardiner to E. J. Campbell, 29 October 1928, p. 8834.

[202] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to King, 29 October 1928, pp. 129218-19. Gardiner claimed that the Klan "... even had men appear on the streets of one or two of the towns where there was very strong opposition to Catholics, in the garb of a priest who were continually making their presence felt around the poll." No evidence was found in the newspapers or in other sources to substantiate this allegation.

[203] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to W. R. Motherwell, 27 October 1928, p. 8876; PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, A. Haydon to King, 7 December 1928, p. 130058.

> too rigid and too fierce and ... made a real mistake when he went out into the field against the Klu Klux Klan [*sic*]. A religious fight is not to be battled with out in the open, but quietly through some simple personal talks in the endeavour to reconcile ....
>
> His going out publicly has aroused the Protestant sentiment in the Province, which is exceedingly strong ... and how far the thing may go is hard to say.[206]

Perhaps a more ominous sign was the fact that the Conservatives were, by all accounts, better organized than they had been at any time since the war.[207] Conservatives had long recognized the need to develop a province-wide "machine", though they were careful of course to avoid that phrase in describing their political organization. In Arm River, for example, only little more than half the eligible voters had bothered to cast ballots in 1925, and

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[204] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, J. G. Gardiner to T. Taylor, 12 December 1928, p. 129778.

[205] *Leader*, 7 November 1928; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, J. E. Allison to Gardiner, 11 December 1928, pp. 8933-35.

[206] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, A. Haydon to King, 7 December 1928, p. 130058.

[207] *Regina Star*, 17 October 1928; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to C. E. Flatt, 8 November 1928, pp. 6912-13; W. C. Barrie to Gardiner, 28 November 1928, p. 8771.

Conservatives were convinced that the large number of unpolled votes in this and in other ridings was due to a lack of organization.[208] The situation changed dramatically in 1928, when a total of 91 per cent of the electorate in Arm River went to the polls and the Conservatives succeeded in "increasing their vote even more than [the Liberals] did ...."[209] Not only had the Conservatives managed to build up a strong organization for the Arm River contest, but they were no longer handicapped by the absence of a daily newspaper. From the outset the *Regina Daily Star* had proved to be a relentless critic of the Gardiner government, and Conservatives were convinced that their near-defeat of the Liberal in Arm River had been due in no small degree to the news column publicity and editorial support it had provided.[210]

The Conservatives had come close, but not quite close enough. J. T. M. Anderson publicly attributed the outcome to a single poll, at Lakeside, where the Liberal candidate had received 114 votes and his opponent only 6. "It will not escape the attention of the public," he announced the day after the by-election,

> that ... at Lakeside ... the majority of the electors are

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[208] *Regina Star,* 2 October 1928; PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, F. W. Turnbull to Bennett, 2 October 1928, p. 25183; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to C. E. Ferris, 30 October 1928, pp. 8720-21.

[209] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to C. A. Dunning, 29 October 1928, p. 8837.

[210] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, Bennett to G. Stirling, 4 December 1928, p. 44148.

> Roman Catholics and are working hand in glove with Premier Gardiner. The Conservative party believes in a square deal for all, but they don't believe in getting down on their knees to solicit the support of any individual or organization whose aims and objects do not emphasize the Union Jack and 100 per cent Canadian citizenship.[211]

This outburst did not go unnoticed among Conservatives who feared such tactics would prove detrimental to the party in the long run. One of them wrote to R. B. Bennett:

> Whatever excuses might be advanced for utterances made during the heat of a campaign by irresponsibles like Bryant, there is no excuse whatever for such a statement as that which comes from our Leader, made after the election was over and in a cool and deliberate analysis of the results.
>
> It is too bad indeed that something was not done to curb these men sooner. They have, I fear, irretrievably committed the Party to a policy which will react terrifically not only Provincially but Federally as well.[212]

The Arm River campaign had been a dirty one, and it set the tone for debate when the Legislature met early in December for what most political observers in Saskatchewan believed would be the last time before dissolution.[213] The session had scarcely begun when J. T. M. Anderson moved an amendment to the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne calling on the government to establish a nonpartisan civil service commission, announce a definite provincial immigration policy and "... introduce remedial legislation for the purpose of clearing up troublesome and difficult situations in ...

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[211] *Leader*, 26 October 1928.

[212] PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. J. Leddy to Bennett, 29 October 1928, p. 25185.

[213] *Regina Star*, 1 November 1928, 5 December 1928; *Western Producer*, 6 December 1928.

our public schools." It was of course defeated on straight party vote,[214] but the Conservatives did not let up during the weeks that followed.

The irregularities in Happyland were given a thorough airing, with the Opposition demanding that the whole matter be referred to the Select Standing Committee on Privileges and Elections. A Conservative motion to this effect was ruled out of order by the Speaker on the grounds that it contained no specific charges, and the Premier and the Attorney-General were quick to defend the decision. The defeated candidate, Baldwin, had not seen fit to protest the election at the time and in any event, they pointed out, the ballots and poll books had since been destroyed in accordance with the Election Act, making it virtually impossible to determine if in fact any irregularities had taken place.[215] The Conservatives got no farther when they attempted to have J. G. Cameron, one of the highways inspectors who had allegedly taken part in the 1927 Manitoba election, appear before the Public Accounts Committee to have his expense accounts scrutinized. The Liberal majority on the Committee, led by Premier Gardiner, refused to allow Cameron to testify, arguing that no civil servant should be questioned under oath unless specific charges were made.[216] Here again, as in the case of the

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[214] *Journals*, 1928-1929, pp. 17, 23-24; *Leader*, 7-8 December 1928, 11 December 1928, 13-15 December 1928.

[215] *Journals*, 1928-1929, p. 71; *Leader*, 11 January 1929; *Regina Star*, 11 January 1929.

[216] *Regina Star*, 31 January 1929; *Leader*, 31 January 1929.

Happyland matter, the government's attitude was doubtless the correct one, but it afforded the Conservatives yet another opportunity to claim that Gardiner wished to avoid an investigation for fear that it would reveal the corrupt methods employed by the Liberals to maintain themselves in office.[217]

On 23 January J. T. M. Anderson introduced an amendment to the School Act forbidding the display of religious emblems or the wearing of religious garb in all public schools. It provoked another acrimonious exchange, with Gardiner and the Liberals again contending that the problem was not a serious one and accusing the Conservative leader of disregarding his own party platform, which had included the qualifying phrase "... where there are pupils or ratepayers of mixed religious denominations." The Liberals easily defeated the amendment, but their oft-repeated claim that they had administered the law without fear or favour did not mollify the Orange Lodge, the School Trustees and other groups who objected to public schools, no matter how few, being used to propagate religious doctrines.[218]

The 1928-1929 session did not prove to be a particularly lengthy or onerous one. Little new legislation was forecast in the Speech from the Throne, save for a power bill and a workmen's compensation measure,[219] and both were passed into law without lengthy debate. The Power Commission Act was to a considerable extent simply an amalgamation of the legislation which the House had approved the year before. The general powers relating to the production and distribution of electricity previously conferred on the Minister of Railways, Labour and Industries were transferred to a new body, the Saskatchewan Power Commission, headed by L. A. Thornton. Towns and cities might sell their electrical utilities to the Commission under terms and conditions set forth in the Act, or the Commission might expropriate them. Provision was also made for the Commission to contract with municipalities, both urban and rural, to provide electric power.[220]

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[217] *Regina Star*, 12 January 1929, 16 January 1929, 1 February 1929.

[218] *Journals*, 1928-1929, pp. 109, 128; *Leader*, 30 January 1929, 23 February 1929; Huel, "A.C.F.C.," pp. 213-14.

In introducing the bill George Spence again declared rather grandiosely that the government would "... stand at the bridge head and guard the field for public ownership of power in the province."[221] The Conservatives pressed for more details, and for the first time Premier Gardiner provided the Legislature and the province with a broad outline of the policy his government intended to follow. He compared the present undertaking to the government telephone system established before the war. At that time there had been a number of private telephone companies providing service in Saskatchewan, as there were at present in the field of electric power. Most of these companies had been acquired over the years without friction or expropriation, he claimed, and the same process would be employed in establishing a province-wide power scheme. The Premier stated that he did not believe it would be necessary for the government to acquire all of the privately-owned plants in the province, so long as those in the three largest cities remained under public control. His government had acted promptly in acquiring the Saskatoon utility because it was vital and because private interests were seeking to obtain it. The Regina plant, on the other hand, was not immediately required, though the Commission might wish to purchase power and distribute it to areas outside the capital city.[222]

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[219] *Journals*, 1928-1929, pp. 7-10.

[220] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 19 Geo. V, Chapter 3.

[221] *Leader*, 19 December 1928.

Gardiner's speech flew in the face of the recommendations of his own royal commission. Not only had he placed limits on the extent to which the principle of public ownership would be applied, but in declaring that the Regina plant was not immediately needed, he was postponing a basic part of the plan recommended by the Power Resources Commission to create an integrated power system in Saskatchewan.[223] An impressive start on such a system would have been a fine record on which to campaign in the coming election, but the Gardiner government had become the prisoner of its own muddled policy. It had acquired the Saskatoon plant, to be sure, and the agreement with the city won easy approval during the session.[224] Yet without resorting to expropriation there was little that could be done to create a province-wide power system and Gardiner, fearing the effect on Liberal party fortunes in Regina and Moose Jaw, had already given assurances in the House that such an arbitrary step would not be taken. The government had instead committed itself to acquiring the plants in those two cities through "amicable negotiations." Whether this would prove a popular policy among Saskatchewan voters remained to be seen, but the prospect of either city selling its plant to the Saskatchewan Power Commission certainly seemed remote as the session drew to a close.[225]

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[222] *Ibid.*, 20 December 1928; *Regina Star*, 21 December 1928.

[223] White, p. 147.

It was doubtless also with an eye to the next election that the Liberals included a reference in the Speech from the Throne to that hardy perennial of western politics, the "natural resources question."[226] Saskatchewan Liberals had long professed to be anxious to see the province gain control of its public lands and natural resources, but had always found the terms unacceptable. In February 1922, for example, the King government had attempted to resolve this long-standing issue by making two proposals to Saskatchewan and the other prairie provinces. The first amounted to an immediate transfer of the public domain and a simultaneous waiving by the provinces of the federal subsidies which they had received in lieu of their lands and resources. The second proposal involved the immediate surrender of the public domain to the provinces and a subsequent accounting to adjust any claims arising out of the administration of western lands and resources by the federal government.[227] Premier Martin had announced that Saskatchewan was not prepared to relinquish the subsidy as a *quid pro quo* for the return of its natural resources. An accounting would not be satisfactory if it dealt only with money received from natural resources and money paid out in the administration of those resources by Ottawa since Confederation. It should, in all fairness to Saskatchewan, deal also with the question of compensation to the prairie provinces for resources which had been alienated for the benefit of the whole country.[228] Dunning also rejected the first proposal out of hand and, like Martin, insisted that any acceptable accounting would have to take into consideration compensation for all lands alienated for the advantage of the Dominion as a whole.[229] A conference between the federal government and the three western provinces in November 1922 could reach no agreement.[230] While Alberta continued to press for the transfer of its lands and resources,[231] the government at Regina ceased to show any real interest in the subject. With the subsidy in lieu of lands scheduled to increase to $750,000 when Saskatchewan's population reached 800,000 and to $1,125,000 in perpetuity when it reached 1,200,000, they took the view that the province would derive greater financial benefit from the subsidy than from the development of its natural resources.[232]

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[224] Saskatchewan, *Statutes*, 19 Geo. V, Chapter 5.

[225] *Leader*, 20 December 1928. It was the Moose Jaw situation, of course, which caused the Liberals particular concern. (AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, W. G. Ross to Gardiner, 4 March 1929, p. 9395; same to same, 11 March 1929, p. 9391.)

[226] *Journals*, 1928-1929, p. 9.

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[227] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, King to W. M. Martin, 20 February 1922, pp. 66107-12.

[228] *Leader*, 13 March 1922.

[229] PAC, W. L. M. King Papers, C. A. Dunning to King, 10 April 1922, pp. 61639-46.

Two events occurred in the late 1920's which excited a new interest among Saskatchewan Liberals in the natural resources question. Bram Thompson, a Regina lawyer, contended in a series of articles and pamphlets that the western lands had never belonged to Ottawa at any time.[233] At the same time developments at Flin Flon caught the popular imagination and encouraged the belief that Saskatchewan too might possess great mineral wealth. Thompson was retained as an adviser to the provincial government in June 1927, and in November Gardiner proposed at the Dominion-Provincial Conference in Ottawa that all unalienated lands be transferred to the three western provinces and that the federal subsidy be continued in perpetuity.[234] The proposal was readily accepted by Mackenzie King, who saw that returning the lands would end criticism of his government on the issue. The Premiers of Ontario, Quebec and the other eastern provinces also gave their approval,[235] and the way was finally clear to accomplish what successive Liberal governments at Regina had found impossible. Gardiner prepared the ground carefully, waiting until the eve of the 1928-1929 session to advise the Prime Minister that the Regina Liberals intended to introduce a resolution

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[230] *Leader*, 18 November 1922, 23 November 1922.

[231] Neatby, *W. L. M. King*, pp. 100-102, 127-28.

[232] *Leader*, 21 March 1924.

[233] B. Thompson, *Our Natural Resources: Address to Members of Saskatchewan Legislature. A Brief Narrative of Despair, Conflict, Victory Requited by Hypocritical Deceit and Betrayal* (Regina: n.p., 1930). In this and earlier pamphlets, and in a series of articles which appeared in the *Canadian Law Times*, of which he was editor, Thompson argued that the natural resources of Saskatchewan belonged to the province by inalienable right, and were only held in trust by the government of Canada prior to 1905.

> ... setting forth reasons for a conference upon the natural resources immediately following the coming session of our Legislature. The object of our delegation will be to have the unalienated resources turned over to the province and also to discuss terms under which the transfer will be mutually acceptable.[236]

The resolution was introduced in due course by T. C. Davis, and after a brief debate it received the unanimous approval of the House.[237]

The Legislature wound up its business on 2 February 1929 in customary fashion, with "... members on both sides hurling bills and papers at each other." In its report of this traditional "paper battle" the *Leader* noted that "... the Conservative members had the advantage of having small bundles of tightly rolled papers as ammunition [which] carried much further and could be more surely directed at a target than the loose bills and papers used by the Liberal members ...."[238] It was to prove a remarkably accurate preview of the election campaign that followed. The Conservatives had seized the initiative in Arm River, and they did not relinquish it until the ballots had been cast on 6 June. Sectarianism in the public schools, immigration, the return of Saskatchewan's natural resources and the wrongdoings of the "Gardiner machine" -- these were the staples of the Conservative campaign which ended twenty-four years of uninterrupted Liberal success at the polls but left no one party in control of the Legislature. The Liberals, with twenty-six seats, were still the largest group, but they were six short of a clear majority. The Conservatives increased their representation from four to twenty-four, and the balance of power was held by the six Independents and five Progressives elected. As they had in every election since 1905, the Liberals once again emerged with the largest percentage of the popular vote, but this time less than half of all Saskatchewan voters had cast their ballots for that party. The Progressives also saw their share of the popular vote slip, from 23 per cent in 1925 to less than 7 per cent in 1929, less even than that garnered by the Independents. The Conservatives, on the other hand, doubled their share of the popular vote, from 18.4 per cent in 1925 to 36.5 per cent in 1929.[239]

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[234] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, B. Thompson to Gardiner, 2 June 1927, pp. 7300-301; same to same, 17 October 1927, pp. 7279-91; *Leader*, 9 November 1927.

[235] Neatby, *W. L. M. King*, pp. 236-37.

[236] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to W. L. M. King, 30 November 1928, p. 8200.

[237] *Journals*, 1928-1929, pp. 62-63, 67; *Leader*, 9-10 January 1929.

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[238] *Leader*, 4 February 1929.

A lengthy account of the 1929 campaign would add little to what has already been written. Some comment on the result is nevertheless in order, for it has become the subject of considerable scholarly debate. The conventional explanation has attributed the Liberals' downfall to the revival of racial and religious discord in the province, discord that coincided with the emergence of the Ku Klux Klan.[240] Gardiner himself admitted after the fight in Arm River that Saskatchewan Liberals were vulnerable to attack on the immigration issue since the federal government, which controlled immigration policy, was also Liberal.[241] Most English-speaking residents of the province had long believed in the necessity of assimilating the "New Canadians" in their midst. The renewed influx of continental Europeans under the Railways Agreement led to a growing disposition to question the ability of society to absorb large numbers of immigrants, and intensified restrictionist sentiment in Saskatchewan. Not only did such sentiment come to dominate patriotic groups and the Conservative party, but also some elements among the organized farmers and labour.

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[239] *Legislative Directory*, pp. 91-158; Eager, "Government of Saskatchewan," p. 344. Among the ranks of the fallen were two Liberal cabinet ministers, S. J. Latta, Minister of Municipal Affairs, and C. M. Hamilton, Minister of Agricutlure.

[240] Kyba, pp. 90-109; Unger, pp. 92-93, 114-20; Huel "A.C.F.C.," pp. 214-16; Calderwood, pp. 239-53; Smith, pp. 143-48, 193-95.

[241] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to W. C. Barrie, 30 November 1928, p. 8770.

It found expression, too, in the vituperative attacks of the Klan, and as the provincial election approached the speeches of Klan organizers became increasingly political and entirely anti-Liberal.[242] The same was true of Bishop Lloyd, who announced on the eve of polling:

> I shall vote against the Gardiner government [because] the Gardiner policy on immigration is non-British if not anti-British. Mr. Gardiner ... has deliberately thrown dust into the eyes of the public on this question.
>
> I shall vote against Mr. Gardiner's government because he has been most unfair in his administration of the school laws of the province ...
>
> I shall vote against Mr. Gardiner's government ... because of their action in the last session of the legislature when the resolution was introduced to prohibit the wearing of a religious garb or exhibiting religious emblems in the public schools of the province.[243]

Lloyd's remarks point up again the considerable overlapping between sentiment in favour of limiting or ending immigration from central and eastern Europe, and that which was opposed to any sectarian influence in the province's public schools. As concern mounted over the increasingly cosmopolitan nature of the population, so also did the assimilationist role of the public school assume greater importance in the eyes of Saskatchewan's Anglo-Protestant majority and the Progressive and Conservative parties.

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[242] *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 11 January 1929, 9 March 1929; *Kerrobert Citizen*, 16 May 1929.

[243] *Regina Star*, 5 June 1929.

During the 1929 election campaign Conservative speakers and the Conservative press extolled the public school as "... the cornerstone of civil and religious liberty, a preventive of anarchy, pauperism, vice and crime," and J. T. M. Anderson maintained that he would rather suffer defeat than waver "one iota" from his aim of giving Saskatchewan children "... an education that would bind them together in the common bond of Canadian citizenship unhampered by sectarian divisions such as are found in many of the schools of the province today."[244] The Progressives also insisted that the public schools be free of sectarian influences and that English be made the only language of instruction in them.[245] The Conservative and Progressive campaigns were ably assisted by the *Orange Sentinel* and by Klan spokesmen like J. J. Maloney, who kept public attention focused on the issue with a series of sensational charges.[246] The Liberals responded to these attacks with the now familiar appeals for tolerance and attempts to minimize the seriousness of the charges, but the Premier was never able to dispel entirely the impression that his government had become overly partial to the Roman Catholic and the immigrant.[247]

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[244] *Ibid.*, 1 May 1929, 1 June 1929.

[245] *Western Producer*, 11 April 1929; *Regina Star*, 1 June 1929.

[246] Huel, "A.C.F.C.," p. 215; *Regina Star*, 14 May 1929.

[247] *Leader*, 18 May 1929; *Saskatoon Star-Phoenix*, 28 May 1929; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, J. W. Estey to Gardiner, 16 May 1929,

There can be little doubt that the Klan helped to bring about the defeat of the Gardiner government by undermining the loose coalition of Catholics, immigrants and moderate Protestants which had enabled the Liberals to dominate the Legislature for so long. The Klan directed its appeal to, and derived most of its support from, Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian Protestants, and throughout the campaign Gardiner received reports that many of these people were deserting the Liberal party.[248] The Conservatives were quick to capitalize on the situation. In Cypress, for example, where a rift developed within Liberal ranks between the Scandinavians and the French Catholics, the two major ethnic groups in the constituency, the Conservatives conveniently allowed their candidate, Donald Corry, to resign on account of "ill health." A Norwegian, John E. Gryde, was nominated in his place. The French voted solidly for the Liberal candidate, Lucien Tourigny, but the English and Scandinavians cast their ballots for Gryde on 6 June and he won easily.[249] What was true of Cypress was true elsewhere in the province, as religious and racial cleavages eroded the Liberals' once strong political base. The Liberal party emerged from the

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p. 9020; same to same, 7 June 1929, pp. 9659-60; G. S. Pound to Gardiner, 8 June 1929, pp. 9633-34.

[248] Calderwood, p. 232; AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, F. Blane to Gardiner, 8 April 1929, p. 8945. See also P. A. Eklund to *Swedish Canada News*, 28 June 1929, (*Ibid.*, p. 9857) and PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Bennett, 6 May 1929, pp. 25259-61.

[249] *Daily Post*, 16 May 1929; *Regina Star*, 20 May 1929; *Legislative Directory*, p. 100.

1929 contest with a greater proportion of its supporters Roman Catholic and foreign-born than ever before,[250] and the key factor was the Ku Klux Klan. The Klan was able to articulate the latent fears and suspicions of Saskatchewan's Anglo-Protestant majority as no other organization was able to do, and provided a focus for all those disparate elements in the province opposed to the government's handling of the school and immigration questions.

In the bitterness of defeat more Liberals in Saskatchewan came to share Andrew Haydon's view that "the attack by the Premier on the Clan [*sic*] in the Legislature was a mistake ...."[251] Gardiner, of course, did not agree. He recognized that the type of campaign directed against his government had been effective,[252] but he was not ready to admit that his slashing attacks on the Klan over the previous eighteen months had been primarily responsible for the outcome of the election. While admitting that it might have been preferable for others to have denounced the Klan and led the attack against it, he was convinced that if he had not brought its political machinations into the open the Liberals would have been defeated much more decisively than they were.[253]

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[250] Milnor, pp. 58-63.

[251] QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, F. N. Darke to Dunning, 12 July 1929.

[252] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to W. R. Motherwell, 15 June 1929, pp. 9576-78.

[253] *Ibid.*, Gardiner to Rev. A. Murray, 12 June 1929, pp. 9661-62.

More recently it has been asserted that issues other than race or religion, particularly civil service reform, were at least as important in bringing about the defeat of Gardiner and the Liberals in 1929.[254] Certainly it can be demonstrated that their common antipathy to the Liberal "machine" and all its works drew Progressives and Conservatives closer together. During the 1929 election both parties attacked the government as corrupt and insisted that the solution was a strong independent civil service commission, public tenders for all government contracts and strict accounting procedures.[255] The cry of "Smash the Gardiner Machine" was not only a powerful rallying point for the two opposition parties during the campaign, but in more dignified garb -- civil service reform -- was to be one of the terms under which the Progressives would agree to support Dr. Anderson after the ballots had been counted.[256] Since the iniquities of the Liberal "machine" had been part of nearly every opposition campaign in the province's history, it was scarcely a new issue in 1929. Two factors, though, gave it a new potency: the greater independence and sophistication of the Saskatchewan electorate, and the fact that after 1926 the very personification of "machine politics" occupied the Premier's office in Regina.

The first was part of the legacy of the farmers political movement which had swept across the prairies at the beginning of the decade. Over a year before the election T. A. Crerar had predicted, correctly as it turned out, that

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[254] Russell, pp. 2-26.

[255] *Western Producer*, 23 May 1929, 30 May 1929; *Regina Star*, 24 April 1929, 11 May 1929, 5 June 1929.

[256] *Western Producer*, 13 June 1929.

> It seems to me there is a growing feeling that Gardiner has a powerful machine, and is relying on his machine. This does not accord with the western temper at the present time. There has never been a period in our history when political affiliation was so loosely held as now, or when there was so much exercise of independent judgement. If Gardiner continues to ignore this factor, as he has largely done up to the present, he may well have a popular feeling aroused against his Administration.[257]

The barrage of charges levelled against the Liberal "machine" during the Arm River by-election and repeated and elaborated during the provincial contest the following spring detached from their former Liberal allegiance many who had come to believe that the party was not above using corrupt methods to maintain itself in office.[258] In the opinion of some observers of the Saskatchewan election, Gardiner's "die-hard attitude to all non-Liberal movements" also contributed to the alienation of agrarian support.[259] As T. A.

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[257] PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 8 February 1928.

[258] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to A. M. Shinbane, 20 June 1929, pp. 10077-79; M. Fritshaw to Gardiner, 8 July 1929, p. 9888; J. E. Doerr to Gardiner, 24 September 1929, p. 14276. The Conservative assault against the "machine" during the 1929 campaign is discussed in greater detail in P. Kyba, "Ballots and Burning Crosses - The Election of 1929," *Politics in Saskatchewan*, pp. 118-20.

[259] PAC, J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to J. S. Woodward, 10 July 1929. On another occasion Dafoe remarked of the Saskatchewan Premier: "He is a political anachronism - a survival of a stage of political development which we have definitely passed in the West. I doubt whether he can be modernized." (*Ibid.*, Dafoe to H. Sifton, 13 June 1929.)

Crerar put it,

> Gardiner has no one to thank but himself for the plight he is in. His first cardinal blunder was his determination to extinguish the Progressives in Saskatchewan. This goes back over several years. In 1921 the Progressives swept Saskatchewan with enormous majorities. In 1925 Dunning, I think against his better judgment and under pressure from the Gardiner wing, opposed them. Since coming to the premiership Gardiner has lost no opportunity to demonstrate against them. It is probably a fact that 75% of the Progressive vote in Saskatchewan in 1921 was of Liberal antecedent. Gardiner's tactics in his efforts to annihilate them lost thousands of these people who are nominally Liberal ....[260]

Whether the issue of civil service reform loomed as large in the popular mind in 1929 as the immigration and school questions seems unlikely. Nevertheless it did contribute to the Liberals' defeat, and Gardiner's extreme partisanship provided a focus for the growing opposition to "machine politics" in the province during the 1920's. Either issue by itself might not have defeated the government, but it found itself assailed from two sides in 1929, and it found as well that in many ridings the opposition had coalesced around a single candidate. Co-operation between the Conservatives and Progressives had first been mooted during the 1925 election campaign, and was given greater publicity by developments at the Conservative convention in Saskatoon in March 1928. The approach to co-operation was not uniform across the province. In some constituencies Progressives supported the Conservative candidate, in others the reverse was true, and in still others a joint convention was held and an Independent candidate named. In a few seats both parties ran candidates, but overall there were three-cornered fights in only twelve of the sixty-three ridings in the province and no Liberal acclamations.[261]

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[260] PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 11 June 1929. For a similar expression of opinion from a Saskatchewan Liberal see AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, G. A. Maybee to Gardiner, 17 June 1929, pp. 9980.

It is also clear that after twenty-four years in power the Liberal "machine" was showing signs of decay and the Liberal campaign lacked the fire and zeal that had characterized their conduct of elections in the past.[262] Gardiner's quest for some dramatic

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[261] *Regina Star*, 29 April 1929, 2 May 1929; *Western Producer*, 14 March 1929, 16 May 1929, 30 May 1929; PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, J. T. M. Anderson to Bennett, 6 May 1929, pp. 25261-62; R. L. Hanbidge to Bennett, 16 June 1929, pp. 25344-45; *Legislative Directory*, pp. 91-158. An analysis of the election returns reveals that much of the Progressive vote went to the Conservative candidate in constitutencies where no Progressive candidate was running in 1929, and that in at least six ridings where there were three-cornered contests the Progressive vote decreased in comparison with 1925, while the Conservative vote increased disproportionately to that of the Liberal. It is also significant that in the sixteen seats where a Progressive had been nominated in 1925 but only Conservatives and Liberals ran in 1929, the Conservatives emerged victorious in most cases.

[262] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, A. McEwen to Gardiner, 25 May 1929, p. 9303, D. Cassels to Gardiner, 28 May 1929, p. 8993; D. Ross to Gardiner, 7 June 1929, p. 9616; W. C. Barrie to Gardiner, 18 August 1929, p. 9794. The Conservative organization, on the other hand, was on a keen edge after the near-defeat of the government candidate in Arm River. (*Ibid.*, E. G. Jones to Gardiner, 19 April 1929, p. 9347; J. A. Forbes to Gardiner, 25 May 1929, p. 9307; PAC, R. B. Bennett Papers, F. R. MacMillan to Bennett, 29 May 1929, p. 25293.) Gardiner concluded that the Liberals had failed to pay sufficient attention to newcomers to the province and young people, and that this had contributed to the party's defeat. (AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to T. W. Sutherland, 4 July 1929, pp. 10084-88.)

Internal feuding may also have weakened the Liberals. While a measure of harmony appeared once again to be restored between accomplishment to divert attention from the emotional campaign being waged by his opponents proved a vain endeavour. As Gardiner himself admitted after the ballots had been counted, the government's power bill was still not well understood in many parts of the province and that "... a good deal more education is required ...."[263] Nor did the pilgrimage to Ottawa in February 1929 to negotiate the return of the province's natural resources produce the desired result. The Saskatchewan delegation, headed by the Premier himself, demanded the return of all unalienated natural resources in the province, a subsidy of $1,125,000 to be continued in perpetuity, and an accounting of all lands disposed of by the federal government since 1905. Mackenzie King agreed to transfer the lands and resources to provincial control, but offered only the current subsidy of $750,000. Gardiner rejected the offer, claiming that the difference between the $1,125,000 Saskatchewan would eventually be entitled to under the existing subsidy arrangements and the federal proposal was too great.[264] Gardiner was not able to return from Ottawa and fight an election as the Premier who had secured control of the

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Dunning and Gardiner by this time (AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, W. L. M. King to Gardiner, 28 December 1928, p. 8204; Gardiner to W. L. M. King, 3 January 1929, p. 8201), the rift between the Premier and George Bell continued to cause Liberals some concern. (QUA, C. A. Dunning Papers, W. M. Martin to Dunning, 13 January 1929.)

[263] AS, J. G. Gardiner Papers, Gardiner to A. E. Vrooman, 17 September 1929, p. 14234. See also E. J. Campbell to Gardiner, 18 June 1929, p. 9808.

[264] *Leader*, 20 February 1929, 23 February 1929, 4 March 1929.

province's public domain, and the Liberals and their newspaper supporters were obliged to approach the issue in a somewhat different way. They attempted to convince the voters that the government was correct in refusing to accept the federal offer and that Ottawa would shortly accede to Gardiner's demand for a larger subsidy.[265] This did not satisfy the Conservatives, who were able to chide the Premier for not having enough faith in the future of Saskatchewan to accept the lower subsidy in the expectation that revenues from the lands and resources would soon make up the difference.[266]

After 6 June, for the first time in the province's history, the Liberals no longer controlled the Legislative Assembly. Neither did their opponents, and a minor constitutional crisis ensued. Hoping to secure Progressive or Independent support, Gardiner refused to resign immediately and gave every indication that he intended to retain power until his government was defeated on the floor of the Legislature.[267] This brought outraged protests from the Conservatives, who insisted that the Gardiner regime had been clearly defeated by the combined forces of the three groups arrayed against it.[268] Gardiner's expectations of Progressive support that might enable him to carry on were of course not realized. He was rebuffed by three members of the Progressive executive when he approached them with a proposal for an amalgamation of the Liberal and Progressive parties, and one of them, M. J. Coldwell, refused Gardiner's offer to join the cabinet as Minister of Education.[269] Shortly after the election the Progressives and Independents agreed to cast their lot with the Conservatives. The basis on which they would agree to form a co-operative government was worked out at a series of separate and joint caucuses of the Conservative, Progressive and Independent members - elect which took place in Regina on 11 June. The Progressives and Independents laid down three conditions -- civil service reform, retention of the identity of each group, and complete freedom in federal politics -- which were readily accepted by the Conservatives. J. T. M. Anderson then resigned as leader of the Conservative party, and was unanimously accepted as the leader of each of the three co-operating parties. In addition, identical resolutions calling on Gardiner to step down were approved by each group.[270] The Premier remained adamant: the Liberals would retain office until the Legislature could be convened to decide the government's fate.[271]

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[265] *Ibid.*, 17 May 1929, 22 May 1929, 27 May 1929.

[266] *Regina Star*, 15 April 1929, 4 June 1929.

[267] PAC, A. K. Cameron Papers, T. A. Crerar to Cameron, 11 June 1929; J. W. Dafoe Papers, Dafoe to H. Sifton, 13 June 1929.

[268] *Regina Star*, 10 June 1929.

When the Legislature assembled on 4 September 1929 the

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[269] AS, Hugh MacLean Papers, G. W. Thorn to M. J. Coldwell, 24 February 1949, MacLean to M. J. Coldwell, 27 February 1949; Young, p. 58.

[270] *Regina Star*, 11 June 1929; *Leader*, 12 June 1929.

[271] *Leader*, 17 June 1929.

Liberal ranks had been augmented by two, the deferred contests in the far northern ridings of Ile à la Crosse and Cumberland having returned government supporters. Gardiner still lacked a majority, and the result was not long in doubt. The Liberal nominee for Speaker was defeated on the first vote of the short session, and J. F. Bryant was chosen in his place.[272] The Speech from the Throne, prepared with the help of Mackenzie King, now something of an expert on the intricacies of minority governments, was then read, Anderson moved a motion of want of confidence and on 6 September 1929 the Liberals went down to defeat on a straight party vote.[273] It was the end of an era in the province's political history.

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[272] *Legislative Directory*, p. 49; *Journals*, 1929, p. 9.

[273] G. Unger, "James G. Gardiner and the Constitutional Crisis of 1929," *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. XXIII, No. 2 (Spring, 1970), pp. 44-49.

CONCLUSION

Saskatchewan, as that perceptive prairie historian, W. L. Morton, has noted,

> is one of the most distinctive and interesting of the Canadian provinces. Nevertheless, it has to be explained. Nature did not design it, nor history call for it. Alberta is the foothills, Manitoba the Winnipeg Basin, but Saskatchewan is a stretch of prairie crossed by a river draining the foothills into Lake Winnipeg. Manitoba was the pivot of North-West history, as Alberta is the pivot of the history of the farther North-West. But Saskatchewan falls flat between these two stools, and the reason for its being is to seek.[1]

When the settled portion of the North-West Territories was given provincial status in 1905, the federal government might well have created a single province, but considerations of popular opinion and political advantage both dictated that there be two. It was natural that Ottawa would seek friendly administrations in the new provinces, and Liberals were called upon to form the first governments at Regina and Edmonton. This led inevitably to Liberal success in the first provincial elections, and in Saskatchewan marked the beginning of a period of uninterrupted Liberal rule during which the party survived even the Progressive onslaught of the early 1920's when Liberal governments in Alberta and Manitoba were swept away.

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[1] W. L. Morton, Review of *Saskatchewan: The History of a Province*, by J. F. C. Wright, *Saskatchewan History*, Vol. VIII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1955), pp. 118-19.

Its boundaries determined not by geography but by considerations of partisan advantage, it has been Saskatchewan's political behaviour which has in large measure set the province apart from its prairie neighbours. If the uniqueness of the province has been reflected in its politics, then it was during the formative period of Saskatchewan's history, the era of settlement which actually began before the province came into being, that its distinguishing characteristics began to emerge. The early twentieth century witnessed a period of spectacular growth on the prairies as settlers took up homesteads, built towns and cities, and transformed the west into the "Granary of the Empire." Wheat was already well established as the principal crop in the Territorial districts of Assiniboia and Saskatchewan by the time provincial status was achieved, and cereal agriculture and the grain grower quickly assumed a preeminence in the economic life of the new province that was never equalled in either Manitoba or Alberta. No one city rose to dominate Saskatchewan; indeed its few urban centres were themselves tributary to Winnipeg, and rural and urban society in the province were to a large extent mutually sustaining. The stock yards and flour mills of Saskatoon, Prince Albert and Moose Jaw were supplied by the rural areas and city shops and wholesale distributors served both communities.

Not only was Saskatchewan's population overwhelmingly rural, it was also ethnically diversified, and this too contributed to the unique character of the province. Much of Saskatchewan was settled in the two decades prior to 1914. The majority of those who came to the province were Anglo-Saxon and Protestant, drawn largely from eastern Canada, Great Britain and the United States. With them they brought their customs and traditions, and to them fell the political and cultural domination of the new province. An ethnic and religious homogeneity was, however, not to be realized in Saskatchewan, for its rich farmlands also proved a powerful attraction to Scandinavians, Germans and central and eastern Europeans. The influx slowed to a trickle during the First World War, and then resumed in the 1920's. Almost the whole of the province was settled by the end of the decade, but people of British origin, while still the largest single group in Saskatchewan, no longer comprised even half the population.

To the Anglo-Protestant majority the immigrant, and especially the immigrant from central or eastern Europe, became an object of intense interest and concern. While it was admitted that the "Galician" would contribute to the opening up of a new province, many had reservations about whether he would, or could, be assimilated. Apprehension about the west's increasingly cosmopolitan population manifested itself at the time of the creation of Saskatchewan, when Laurier sought to reintroduce confessional schools. The opposition of Protestants to separate schools arose not only from traditional anti-Catholicism, but also from a conviction that the children of the various nationalities settling in their midst ought to be educated together. While the extremes of passion aroused in 1905 soon abated, the "school question" remained a volatile issue in Saskatchewan. To those who believed that only a nonsectarian public school system and English language instruction could mould the "foreigner" into a responsible British subject and Canadian citizen, the efforts of the province's European minorities to preserve their language and culture continued to be viewed with suspicion. As naturalization bestowed the franchise on more and more of these newcomers, the dominant Anglo-Protestant group responded by attempting with ever greater vigour to inculcate Canadian ideals of citizenship and encourage conformity to Protestant moral standards.

An agricultural economic base and a population that was preponderantly rural and ethnically diversified combined to set Saskatchewan apart from its neighbours and shaped its political history after 1905. The Liberals were able to dominate the legislature during the first quarter century because they, more than any of their opponents, managed to accommodate within their ranks both the native-born and the immigrant, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant, the farmer and the townsman.

Since most of the electorate was composed of farmers, their interests would have had to be given first consideration by any government, and at the outset Haultain, no less than Walter Scott, could make a strong claim for agrarian support. Within the constraints imposed by inadequate revenues, the Territorial government had shown a sympathetic concern for the problems of the grain grower, and a readiness to offer practical assistance in solving them. On the other hand, Haultain had shown little sympathy for French Canadian and Roman Catholic aspirations prior to 1905. It had, after all, been Haultain's government which had centralized control of education in Regina and eliminated clerical influence from the Territorial school system. His vigorous campaign against the autonomy terms and especially the clause in the Saskatchewan Act guaranteeing minority rights in education won him the support of staunch Anglo-Saxon Protestants but not the election, for Roman Catholics, French Canadians, those of European origin and even many moderate Protestants cast their ballots for the Liberals in 1905.

Thereafter energetic development policies, the efforts of the partisan civil service and a sensitivity to the wishes of the organized farmers and the women's suffrage and temperance movements enabled the Liberals to entrench themselves firmly in power. They sedulously courted the farmers and lost no opportunity to demonstrate sympathy for their goals. The Scott government paid close attention to resolutions passed at the annual Grain Growers' conventions, and many of them subsequently found expression in legislation. Even the membership of the government and the S.G.G.A. overlapped, as some of the more prominent leaders in the farmers' organization were given cabinet positions. The farmers reciprocated by eschewing direct political action and favouring the Liberals with their votes at election time.

The Saskatchewan farmer's attachment to the Liberal party was natural for still other reasons. The vast majority had only recently arrived in the province, more often than not since the turn of the century. To the Liberals fell the advantage of being the government in office at a time when hopes were high and conditions buoyant. Many newly enfranchised voters had no political traditions -- this was particularly true of those from continental Europe -- and were persuaded to vote for the party that federally offered free homesteads and a chance for a new life in a new land. The Scott government was quick to ingratiate itself with the province's sizeable ethnic minorities, and the considerable success it enjoyed at the polls after 1905 derived as much from skilful manipulation of the "foreign vote" as from an increasingly intimate relationship with the organized farmers. As for the Liberal "machine," it was certainly efficient, but it operated in a situation where the Liberals were favoured and were in fact the majority party.

Haultain's provincial rights platform had at least provided a single focus of opposition, independent of Conservative sentiment, for all who opposed the Scott government, and his task after 1905 was to detach some portion of the support which had gone to the Liberals in that first election. As the appeal of an abstract constitutional issue grew worn with time, the Provincial Rights party attempted to cultivate farm support by catering to agrarian desires as expressed through the S.G.G.A. Before 1914 the Grain Growers and other organizations in the province were urging that the government take a direct hand in providing better railway and telephone service, a scheme of insurance to compensate farmers for losses suffered through hail damage and a system of interior storage elevators. Haultain and the Provincial Rights party did support outright government ownership in each instance, while the Liberals chose, after careful consideration, to follow a somewhat different course.

That course might best be characterized as one of partnership, of co-operation between the provincial government and private companies or local municipalities. Thus the Scott government purchased and operated the urban and long distance telephone lines in the province, but left the provision of rural service to local co-operative telephone companies; guaranteed the bonds of private railway companies to encourage the extension of branch lines; provided loans to the farmer-owned Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company and established a voluntary hail insurance scheme but left its operation to the rural municipalities. In co-operating with private companies or municipal governments, the Liberals were not acting on the basis of any principle. If private enterprise failed to provide service, did so too slowly or in an indifferent fashion, successive Liberal governments showed a willingness to take action by whatever means seemed most efficacious and politically palatable. They were not averse to public ownership and operation, as the creation of the Saskatchewan Farm Loan Board in 1917 was to demonstrate. Even here, though, it was never intended that the government secure a monopoly in the field, and in fact the Board scarcely even managed to provide competition for existing lending agencies in the province. In the case of public power in the late 1920's, the Liberals again contented themselves with securing only a part of the field, confident that in this way "... it would be possible to satisfy demands for public ownership and at the same time exert a measure of control over the operations of the whole utility."[2]

Haultain misjudged the strength of public ownership sentiment among the organized farmers, and especially among the S.G.G.A. executive, but it was his abrupt reversal on the question of reciprocity which forever doomed him and his party in the farmers' eyes. The decision to abandon the principle of nonpartisanism and adopt the Conservative label in the 1912 election only reinforced the image of a high tariff party at a time when agrarian resentment over the defeat of free trade was still strong. It also diminished Haultain's claim for support irrespective of federal party distinctions which had enabled him to monopolize opposition to the Liberals in the first two provincial contests. Never again were the Conservatives able to establish a close rapport with the organized farmers, nor were they able to overcome the considerable advantage which the Liberals enjoyed among Catholic and immigrant voters. There was little the Conservatives could offer as an alternative to the government other than a more efficient administration, and without a strong base among the farmers or the province's ethnic minorities their role as the opposition party became increasingly irrelevant. The annual "farmers' parliament" came to overshadow the Legislature and it became part of the accepted practice of government in Saskatchewan to secure the

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[2] White, p. 93.

Grain Growers' approval of important bills before permitting the Opposition to examine and debate them.

Accommodating its legislation and policies to the wishes of organized agriculture proved a relatively simple task for the Scott government, given the close links that were developing between the two. The demands of the reform movement for direct legislation and prohibition proved more difficult to assuage. In a sense, the passion for reform that swept the province before 1914 was yet another manifestation of the majority group's desire to assimilate, or at least acculturate, the "foreigner." The Banish-the-Bar Committee found its strongest supporters among those of British origin and Protestant, and especially evangelical Protestant, religion who saw politicians, liquor dealers and immigrants linked together in a corrupt alliance. Prohibition, it was alleged, would not only purify political life but would also have a civilizing influence on the personal habits of European immigrants. The proponents of direct legislation argued that it too would diminish corruption and the influence of the party "machine." By encouraging direct participation in the legislative process it would also stimulate an interest in and a knowledge of public affairs among those of foreign birth.

The response of the government was a cautious one, as it had been when Scott and his colleagues were confronted with the demand for public ownership of telephones and elevators, yet it was far from reactionary. Saskatchewan was, for instance, the first province to pass a direct legislation act, though this never came into force. The bill failed to secure what the government considered an acceptable measure of support in a referendum held for the purpose in 1913, and little more was heard of this political panacea in Saskatchewan. The sudden collapse of the campaign for direct legislation may well have been due in part to the government's reluctance to promote a remedy which some of its members believed was inimical to the British parliamentary system, but there was also a fatal weakness within the loosely-organized reform movement itself. "In general," it has been pointed out, "direct legislation appealed to those who had a special cause to advance, a class interest, a moral reform or a 'one idea' remedy for existing ills." Once that goal was accomplished or abandoned, interest in promoting direct legislation waned.[3]

This was certainly true of those who wished to eradicate the liquor traffic. They turned away from direct legislation and sought, first through an aggressive publicity campaign and then through the threat of political action, to influence the government to end the retail sale of liquor in the province. One student of the prohibition movement has asserted that success was "almost predictable" in New Brunswick, Manitoba and Saskatchewan on the eve of war,[4] but this is surely an exaggeration in the case of the last mentioned province. There the Scott government had seemed on the verge of closing the bars in December 1913, only to withdraw the legislation at the last moment. The failure of the Banish-the-Bar Committee to attain even this limited objective can be traced to the fact that prohibition, like all deeply felt causes, was a source of great inconvenience to politicians. Political parties in Saskatchewan were not held together by principles or by hard causes so much as by generous compromises that would attract the widest possible support among voters. The prohibition movement was not without some supporters among Roman Catholics and European-born immigrants, but its leadership was essentially Protestant and Anglo-Saxon, and the obvious hostility some prohibitionists were beginning by 1914 to exhibit toward separate schools further dampened enthusiasm for temperance reform among Saskatchewan's religious and ethnic minorities. Prohibitionists were quick to intepret the government's reluctance to pass more stringent laws as proof of the malign influence of the liquor interests. Such a view was not without foundation, as Bradshaw's revelations in 1916 would make clear, but the Liberals were also naturally reluctant to alienate voters upon whom they had come to depend at election time.

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[3] W. L. Morton, "Direct Legislation," p. 284.

[4] Allen, *Social Passion*, p. 22.

Under war conditions abstinence became a form of patriotism, and the prohibition movement was able to win broad public support for its cause. In 1915 Premier Scott closed the bars and in their place established a system of government dispensaries which marked a new departure in state control of the liquor business in Canada. Even this did not long satisfy the growing demand for the complete eradication of the liquor traffic, and the Liberals decided to consult public opinion by means of a referendum. With women casting ballots for the first time, and with many recent immigrants, especially the European-born, viewing the referendum as a kind of loyalty test through which they could demonstrate that they were good Canadian citizens, Saskatchewan voted for prohibition by an overwhelming margin. Success proved to be short-lived. The assault on the Saskatchewan Temperance Act began almost as soon as the war ended and the patriotic stimulus was removed. Enforcement of an increasingly unpopular law became a source of acute embarrassment to the Liberals until it was repealed in 1924. It never became a political liability, however, for if the Liberals were divided over the issue so were their opponents. Sentiment in favour of a return to some form of legalized sale of liquor was mobilized not by a political party hoping to unseat the Liberals, but by the same kind of organized pressure group which had convinced the government to enact prohibition in the first place.

The war did more, of course, than win new, if temporary, converts to the prohibitionist cause. It also fostered or intensified religious, ethnic and class discontents in Saskatchewan, discontents which were in the main directed against a government tarnished by scandal and weakened by the illness which incapacitated Premier Scott. The victory at the polls which had eluded the Conservatives for more than a decade seemed finally within their grasp, but it was not to be. In spite of the economic and social dislocations of the war years the Liberals were able to maintain their control over the provincial government, largely because no single party was able to provide a focus of expression for the growing disenchantment with their administration of Saskatchewan's affairs.

The Conservatives early assumed the leadership of the crusade to purge Saskatchewan classrooms of German, Ruthenian and even French, seeing this as a means of unseating a government which owed much of its success at the polls to the unwavering support of immigrant voters. In attempting to capitalize on the wartime suspicion of the "foreigner" by offering themselves as the champions of nonsectarian, national schools W. B. Willoughby and the Conservatives could expect no support from the Catholic or the ethnic voter and received none, but they were not even able to convince a majority of the Ontario and British-born that it was time for a change of government. Nativist sentiment was not as strong in 1917 as it would later become, and the timing of the election certainly favoured the Liberals. The conscription crisis, the Bolshevik Revolution, increasing labour militancy and the "Red Scare" all combined to deepen suspicion of the "foreigner" as an undesirable element in Saskatchewan society, but in 1918 and 1919 the Conservatives had no means of channelling these sentiments against the government. Similarly, when J. E. Bradshaw first presented his sensational charges of graft and corruption to a surprised Legislature in February 1916 it seemed that the Scott government would be driven from office under a cloud of scandal. A vigorous housecleaning and an attractive new leader chosen after

Scott was compelled to retire to British Columbia for the sake of his health did much to rehabilitate the Liberals' image, and by the time Saskatchewan voters went to the polls in 1917 the crisis had passed.

The Conservatives were never in a position to take advantage of the growing discontent evident among farmers and workingmen during the war years. Organized labour showed an increasing dissatisfaction with its failure to share more completely in wartime prosperity, and a willingness to resort to the strike weapon more often than it ever had before. Workingmen had voted Liberal as a matter of course in the early years,[5] but the relationship became strained after 1914 with labour's new restiveness and the government's realization, particularly in 1918 and 1919, that its public responsibilities on occasion ran counter to the interests of trade unionists. The winds of change were blowing through the labour movement, and found expression in the radical O.B.U. and in the appearance of Labour candidates in the 1917 and 1921 provincial elections. The O.B.U. failed to make a lasting impression in Saskatchewan, but its brief popularity was an indication of labour's disenchantment with the *status quo*. Of far greater significance was the election of a Labour M.L.A. in Moose Jaw in 1921, for it demonstrated that trade unionists were ceasing to regard the Liberal party as their own.

An even more ominous threat to Liberal fortunes was the new political militancy of Saskatchewan farmers, but again it was not the Conservatives, identified as they were with an increasingly unpopular federal administration, who were able to capitalize on it. Instead rural voters were attracted to the Nonpartisan League, which articulated many of the farmers' demands and presented itself as the political arm of the S.G.G.A. By appealing to farmers as a class to elect a farmers' government the League threatened one of the Liberals' traditional bases of support, but the comfortable relationship with the organized farmers served the Martin government well. The S.G.G.A. refused to endorse the League's political activities, and the campaign of abuse subsequently directed against that farm body counted against Nonpartisan candidates on election day. Furthermore, the Liberals stole one of the League's most attractive planks by inaugurating a scheme of low cost agricultural credit on the eve of the election, and their organization proved more than a match for the new farmers' party. Although the Nonpartisan League failed to capture either the S.G.G.A. or the government at Regina, its frank appeal to agrarian class consciousness introduced a new element into provincial politics, the implications of which would become only too clear to the old party politicians once peace had returned.

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[5] Cherwinski, "Organized Labour in Saskatchewan," p. 245.

Voter opposition to the Regina government thus began to develop after 1914, but because no single party was able to provide a focus of expression for the many discontents engendered or intensified by the war, the Liberals weathered the storm. Until 1917 they had managed to avoid the internecine feuding which had long plagued Alberta Liberalism, but conscription and coalition had opened a rift within party ranks. Complete harmony was never restored during the postwar decade, as differences over Union government gave way to disagreement over the party's attitude toward the Progressives and personal animosities developed between C. A. Dunning and J. G. Gardiner and Gardiner and George M. Bell. Yet if the Liberals found themselves beset by internal divisions, they were still in a much stronger position than any of their opponents at war's end. The old alliance of native-born and immigrant farmers, Roman Catholics and moderate Protestants was still intact, and while disenchantment with the government continued to grow -- as evidenced by the slow but steady decline in the Liberals' share of the popular vote in the elections of 1921 and 1925 -- it did not become strong enough to overwhelm the Liberals until the end of the decade.

During the 1920's the Liberals continued to give the province competent government; indeed they prided themselves on their administration of Saskatchewan's affairs along business-like lines. The emphasis was no longer on assisting settlement and expansion so much as on securing a more diversified balance in the provincial economy, for unstable wheat prices and frequent droughts had demonstrated that one-crop cereal agriculture was both a blessing and a curse. The use of provincial funds to provide low interest loans to farmers for the purpose of encouraging agricultural diversification was one noteworthy initiative. It must be admitted, though, that many of the loans were little more than temporary subsidies to farmers in need of assistance because of drought or deflation, and in this sense the Farm Loan Board must be judged a questionable scheme.

Successive Liberal governments also sought to encourage the industrial development of the province through the Bureau of Labour and Industries, created in 1920. The chief stumbling block here was the fact that Saskatchewan did not have control of its lands and natural resources. That the Regina Liberals did so little to secure the transfer of these resources to provincial control was a reflection of the pragmatic, somewhat conservative point of view of the three men who occupied the Premier's office during the decade. An assured source of revenue, in the form of the federal subsidy paid in lieu of the resources, was considered more important than the control of the resources themselves, especially since this might have involved the province in costly development schemes. Saskatchewan's population was approaching 900,000 by the summer of 1929, when drought returned to haunt the prairies,[6] but Canada's third largest province was no closer to developing a mature, stable economy, either agriculturally or industrially, and the disaster of the 1930's would bear down all the harder because of this.

Whether successive Liberal administrations in the 1920's could be described as cautiously progressive or shrewdly political, they certainly compared favourably with the governments of the other prairie provinces. If the Liberals under Martin and Dunning appeared to be more conservative and less innovative than they had been in an earlier day, this was due in large measure to their preoccupation with political survival in the face of the wave of agrarian insurgency that swept the prairies after the war. The first flush of victory in Assiniboia imparted an enthusiasm for the Progressive cause that did not flag until the farmers had swept all but one of Saskatchewan's sixteen seats in the 1921 federal election. The farmers' entrance into provincial politics, on the other hand, was much more hesitant, and the same degree of unanimity was never achieved. Again, as in 1917, the close association between the government and the Grain Growers served the Liberals well. The small group of men who had come to dominate the highest echelons of organized agriculture in Saskatchewan were no less determined to preserve this relationship than was Premier Martin, and until 1922 they managed to thwart all efforts to commit the S.G.G.A. to provincial political action. For their part, the Liberals played down all ties with the federal wing of the party and in every possible fashion, including the addition of the president of the S.G.G.A. to the cabinet, sought to demonstrate their sympathy for the views of organized agriculture.

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[6] *Agriculture Report*, 1930, pp. 9-15. The 1931 census put Saskatchewan's population at 921,785. (Canada, Dominion Bureau of Statistics, *Seventh Census of Canada, 1931*, Vol. I [Ottawa: King's Printer, 1936], p. 66.)

These tactics enabled the Saskatchewan Liberals to avoid defeat in the first postwar election, but in the long run they destroyed the special relationship which had existed between the government and the organized farmers since 1905. J. A. Maharg's entrance into the cabinet strengthened the resolve of those who objected to the close liason in personnel and views between the S.G.G.A. executive and the Liberals, and wished to see a true farmers' government at Regina. Sentiment in favour of provincial political action found expression outside the S.G.G.A., through the Nonpartisan League and the disparate group of Independents that emerged on the eve of the 1921 provincial election. Opposition to the Liberals, while considerable, was not yet well organized, and the record number of acclamations in 1921 suggests that, intentionally or not, the Premier caught his opponents unprepared.

Martin's political blunder in December 1921 -- for his full and open endorsation of the federal Liberal party was certainly that in the light of his earlier disavowals -- finally compelled the entrenched leadership of the S.G.G.A. to take the farmers' organization into provincial politics. After 1922, though, Maharg, Musselman and their cohorts found themselves increasingly on the defensive within their own organization. Antagonism toward their virtual monopoly control of the highest executive positions in the S.G.G.A. and the Saskatchewan Co-operative Elevator Company manifested itself in the efforts of the so-called "Ginger Group" to end the practice of multiple office holding. The bitter feud which ensued distracted the farmers' organization from politics and sapped its energies and its numerical strength. The insurgents, led by George Edwards, A. J. McPhail and Violet McNaughton, were unwilling to support provincial political action behind a group of men who were using the advancement of political action and opposition to the Wheat Pool to protect their entrenched position atop the S.G.G.A. In the hope of dislodging Maharg and the other "Co-op" men they placed their influence firmly behind the Pool campaign, even though this meant developing a close working relationship with Martin's successor as Premier, C. A. Dunning. By 1924 the "Ginger Group" had triumphed. The Wheat Pool was firmly established in Saskatchewan and Maharg was no longer president of the S.G.G.A., but in addition the Grain Growers were no longer in provincial politics. This left the farmers' political movement in Saskatchewan an orphan, for the Farmers' Union had eschewed direct intervention in politics from the outset, and the provincial Progressives received little aid or comfort from their federal counterparts.

Dunning's appeal to an agrarian electorate ensured a Liberal victory when Saskatchewan voters again went to the polls in 1925. Once that contest was out of the way he was able to accomplish what Martin had tried and failed to do in 1921: reunite the federal and provincial wings of the Liberal party. The Saskatchewan Premier openly campaigned for Mackenzie King in the 1925 federal election and then accepted a portfolio in King's cabinet the following year. The elevation of J. G. Gardiner to the premiership after Dunning's departure marked even more clearly the Liberals' desire to return to the old style of politics in Saskatchewan. No attempt was made to hide the link with their Ottawa counterparts, and unlike his two predecessors, who had adopted a rather flexible attitude toward the Progressives, Gardiner fought them at every turn. The federal Liberal sweep in 1926 and a host of provincial by-election victories seemed to confirm the wisdom of Gardiner's course, but in the end his extreme partisanship proved to be his undoing.

The Progressive movement which had swept across the province after the war had infused the electorate with a new sense of independence and a distrust of "partyism." In questioning whether the furious partisanship which had been so much a part of Saskatchewan public life since 1905 really had anything to do with the straightforward issues of provincial administration the Progressives harked back to the Territorial tradition of nonpartisanism. Like Haultain, they insisted that federal political distinctions ought not to prevent co-operation with regard to the many practical subjects with which the legislature at Regina was expected to deal. These sentiments did not disappear with the ebbing of the Progressive tide, and after 1926 politicians in Saskatchewan, as in other provinces, were to find "... the 'machines' less well organized, the voting less predictable."[7] Gardiner did not have Dunning's sure touch in gauging public opinion and failed to discern the new mood of the electorate. In fact Gardiner's extreme partisanship consolidated opposition to the Liberals. Weakness and division among their opponents had worked to the Liberals' advantage in the 1917 provincial election, and in the first postwar contest. All this was beginning to change by mid-decade. The Conservatives, who had fallen victim to the farmers' enthusiasm for independent political action and almost completely collapsed after the war, began to revive under J. T. M. Anderson. At the same time there were signs of a growing tendency toward co-operation between the Conservatives and Progressives. Both could agree on the desirability of ending the political corruption associated with the Liberal "machine," for both had felt its full force at election time. There were far fewer uncontested constituencies in 1925 than in 1921, proof that opposition to the government was increasing and was better organized, but Dunning's strength among the farmers kept the Liberals in office for another term. His successor was the very personification of all that the farmers' political movement had sought to destroy, and this drew Progressives and Conservatives closer together after 1926.

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[7] W. L. Morton, *Progressive Party*, p. 267.

At the same time that Gardiner's antipathy toward the Progressives was alienating agrarian support, racial and religious cleavages were eroding the Liberals' once strong political base among moderate English-speaking Protestants, Roman Catholics and European-born immigrants. Twice before, in 1905 and 1917, the Liberals had been confronted with the sort of highly emotional issue which threatened to destroy this coalition. Twice before the government had survived, but an appeal for tolerance and fair play, coupled with a vigorous defence of its record, was of no avail in 1929. By articulating the latent fears and suspicions of Saskatchewan's Anglo-Protestant majority as no other organization had ever been able to do, the Ku Klux Klan provided a focus for all those disparate elements in the province opposed to the government's handling of the school and immigration questions. All parties in Saskatchewan sought to profit from the resurgence of nativist feeling, Conservatives and Progressives by openly consorting with the Klan, Liberals by seeking to exploit this link as a means of embarrassing their opponents. Up until the date of polling Gardiner had remained confident that it was the Liberals who would derive the greatest political benefit from the activities of the Klan. His expectations were not realized, of course. The Klan's appeal to those concerned about the erosion of traditional Protestant values, or the "menace" of sectarian influence in the public schools and unrestricted immigration from continental Europe, temporarily polarized Saskatchewan politics along new lines. At the same time it provided a basis for closer co-operation between the two opposition parties than had existed at any time before during the 1920's. The consequences were evident on 6 June 1929, for the Liberals faced a single opponent in all but twelve of the province's sixty-three ridings, and the party emerged from that contest with a greater proportion of its supporters Roman Catholic and foreign born than ever before.

Twenty-four years of uninterrupted Liberal rule came to an end in that election. The Conservatives had ridden to power on the wave of racial and religious bigotry engendered by the Ku Klux Klan and antipathy to the wrongdoings, real and imagined, of the "Gardiner machine." The narrowness of such an appeal was illustrated by the fact that even in 1929 the Conservatives did not manage to win a majority of the seats in the Saskatchewan Legislature. For the Liberals, who even in defeat still had the largest following in the province, the result was to prove a blessing in disguise. It fell to their opponents to cope with the drought and disaster that lay ahead. J. T. M. Anderson's Co-operative Government suffered the fate of so many that were in office when the Depression began, and was swept away in the next provincial election. The Liberal party lived to fight another day. Its survival and eventual return to power aptly illustrates that basic conservatism which has been a trait of Saskatchewan voters since 1905, and ensured a continuation of the intensely partisan politics which has come to set Saskatchewan apart from its prairie neighbours.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AS, Archives of Saskatchewan

PAC, Public Archives of Canada

PMAA, Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta

QUA, Queen's University Archives

SLAO, Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly Office

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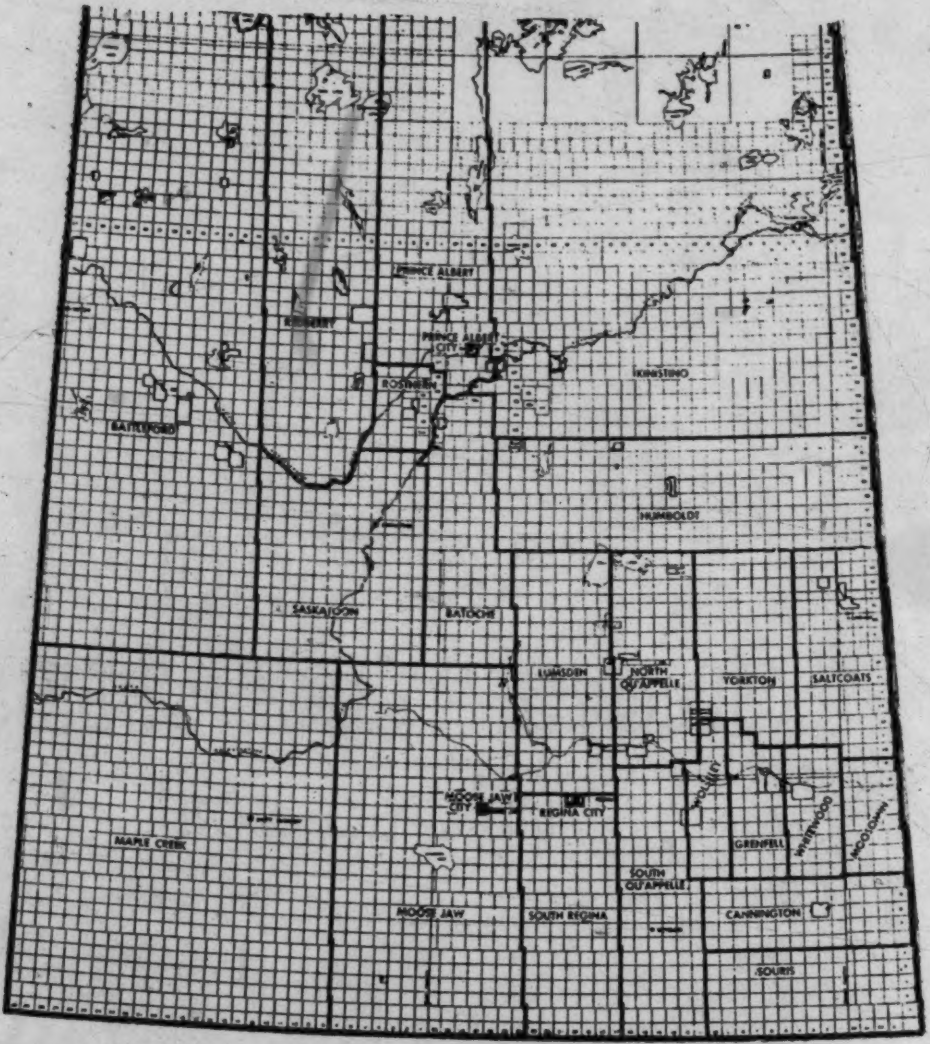
APPENDIX

MAPS SHOWING CONSTITUENCY BOUNDARIES FOR SASKATCHEWAN PROVINCIAL ELECTIONS, 1905 - 1929

Map 1: THE ELECTION OF 1905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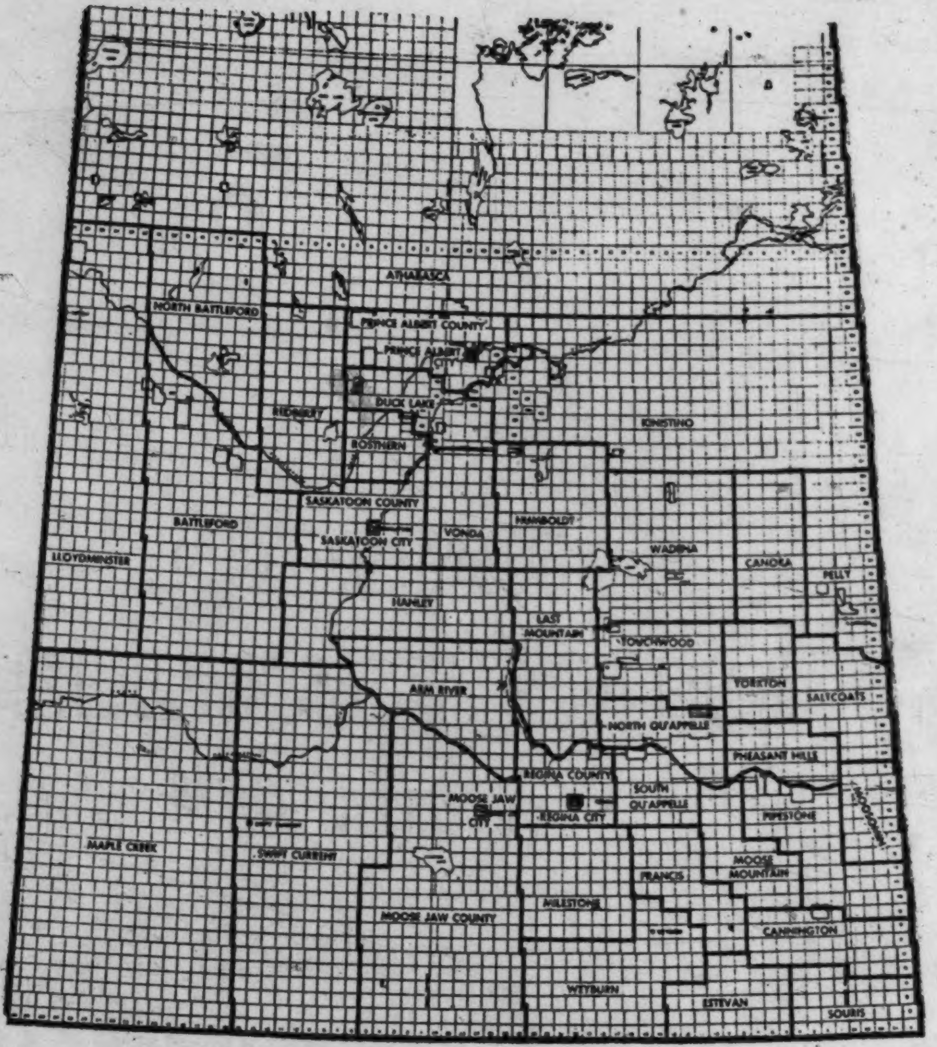
REDBERRY
PRINCE ALBERT CITY
ROSTHERN
KINISTINO
BATTLEFORD
HUMBOLDT
SASKATOON
BATOCHE
LUMSDEN
NORTH QU'APPELLE
YORKTON
SALTCOATS
MOOSE JAW CITY
REGINA CITY
WOLSELEY
GRENFELL
WHITEWOOD
MOOSOMIN
MAPLE CREEK
SOUTH QU'APPELLE
CANNINGTON
MOOSE JAW
SOUTH REGINA
SOURIS

(Source: *Legislative Directory*, p. 161.)

Map 2: THE ELECTION OF 1908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PRINCE ALBERT COUNTY
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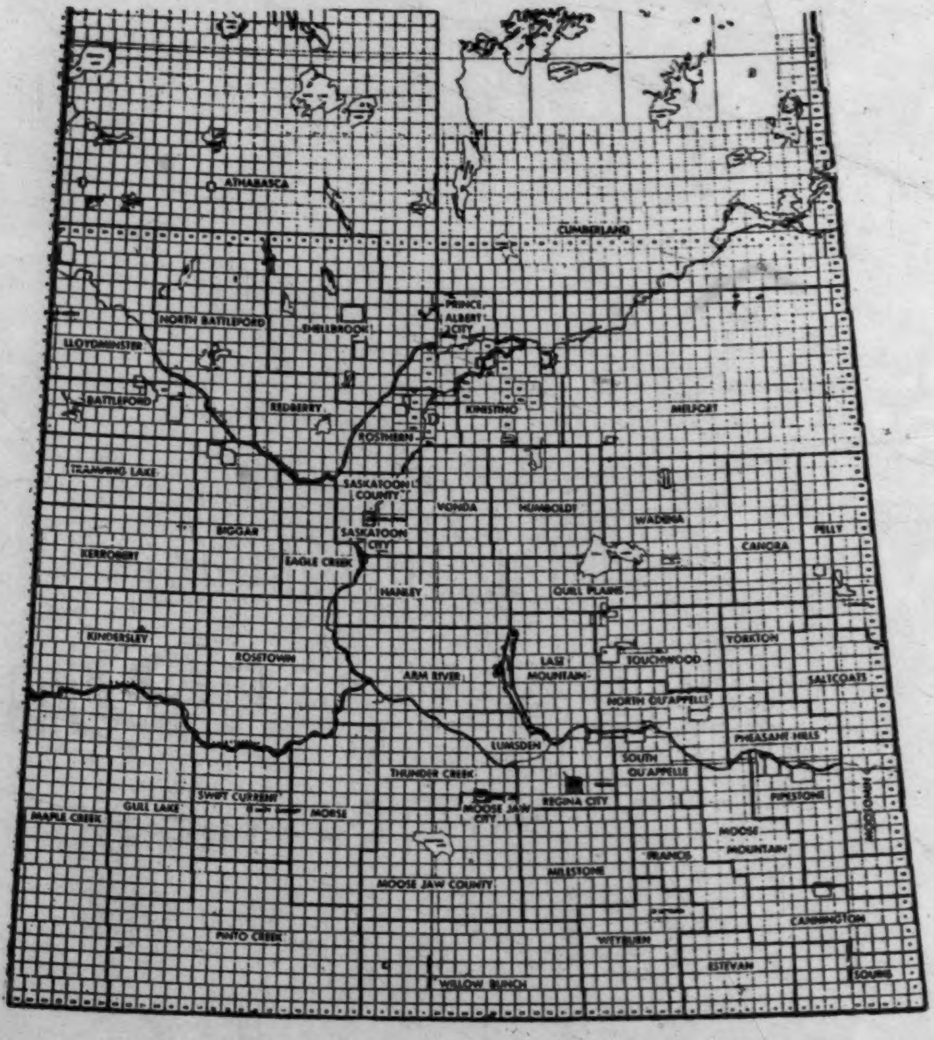
DUCK LAKE
REDBERRY
ROSTHERN
KINISTINO
SASKATOON COUNTY
SASKATOON CITY
BATTLEFORD
VONDA
HUMBOLDT
LLOYDMINSTER
WADENA
CANORA
PELLY
HANLEY
LAST MOUNTAIN
TOUCHWOOD
YORKTON
SALTCOATS
ARM RIVER
NORTH QU'APPELLE
PHEASANT HILLS
REGINA COUNTY
MOOSE JAW CITY
REGINA CITY
SOUTH QU'APPELLE
MOOSOMIN
PIPESTONE
MAPLE CREEK
SWIFT CURRENT
FRANCIS
MOOSE MOUNTAIN
MILESTONE
MOOSE JAW COUNTY
CANNINGTON
WEYBURN
ESTEVAN
SOURIS

(Source: *Legislative Directory*, p. 162.)

Map 3: THE ELECTION OF 1912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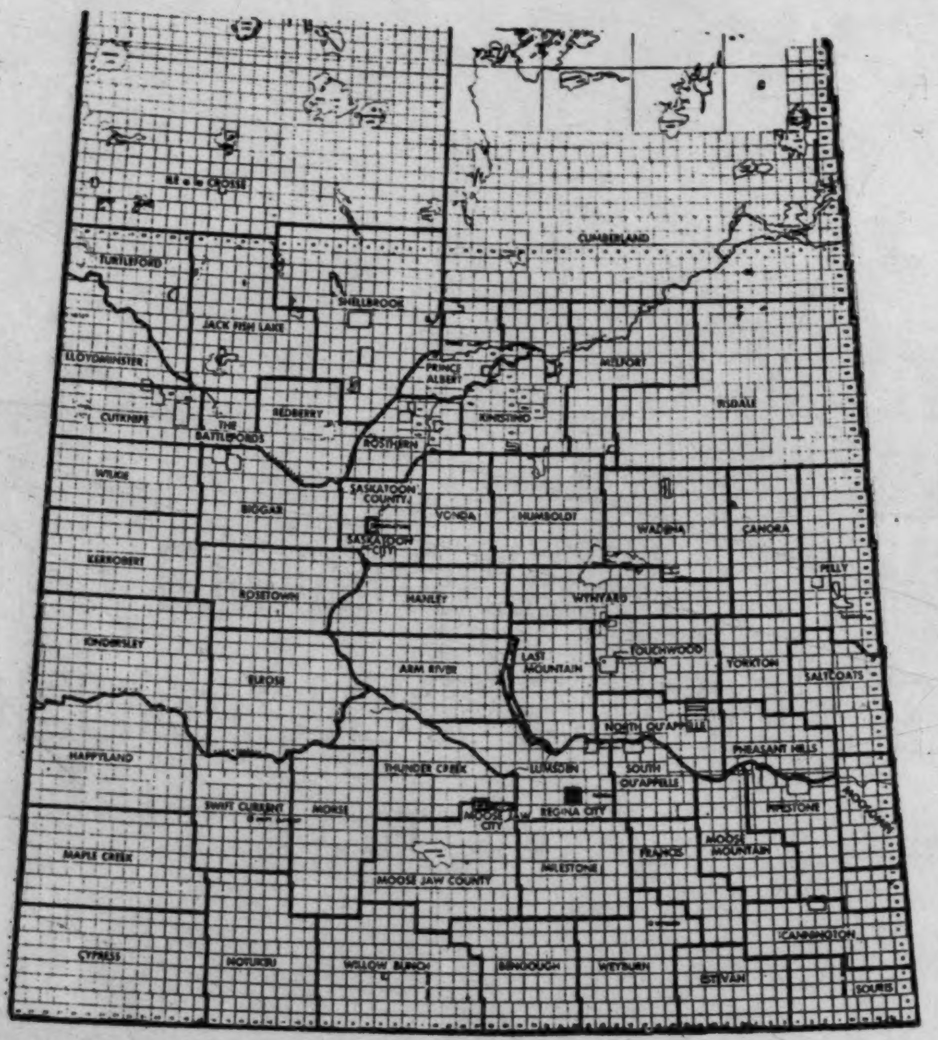
PRINCE ALBERT CITY
LLOYDMINSTER
BATTLEFORD
REDBERRY
KINISTINO
MELFORT
ROSTHERN
TRAMPING LAKE
SASKATOON COUNTY
VONDA
HUMBOLDT
WADENA
BIGGAR
SASKATOON CITY
CANORA
PELLY
KERROBERT
EAGLE CREEK
HANLEY
QUILL PLAINS
KINDERSLEY
YORKTON
ROSETOWN
LAST MOUNTAIN
TOUCHWOOD
ARM RIVER
SALTCOATS
NORTH QU'APPELLE
PHEASANT HILLS
LUMSDEN
SOUTH QU'APPELLE
THUNDER CREEK
PIPESTONE
MOOSOMIN
SWIFT CURRENT
GULL LAKE
MAPLE CREEK
MORSE
MOOSE JAW CITY
REGINA CITY
MOOSE MOUNTAIN
FRANCIS
MOOSE JAW COUNTY
MILESTONE
CANNINGTON
PINTO CREEK
WEYBURN
ESTEVAN
SOURIS
WILLOW BUNCH

(Source: *Legislative Directory*, p. 163.)

Map 4: THE ELECTION OF 1917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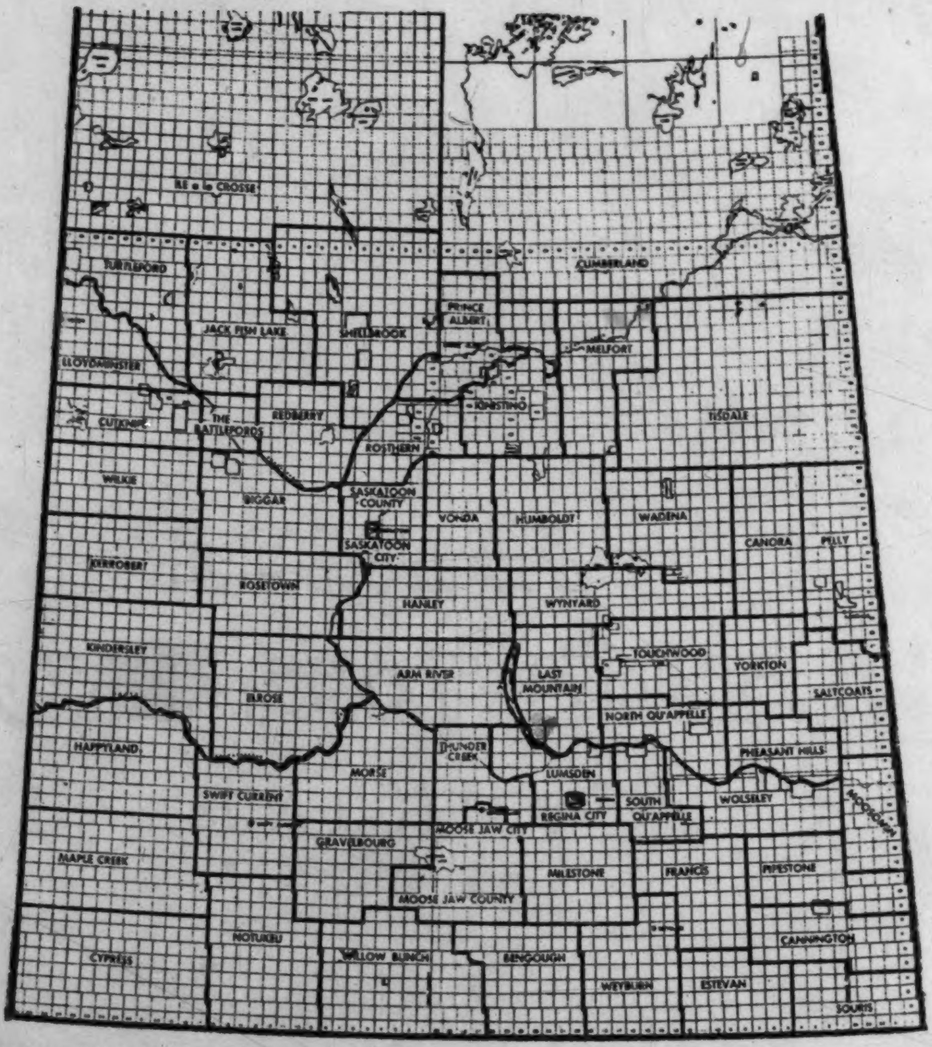
CUMBERLAND
TURTLEFORD
SHELLBROOK
JACK FISH LAKE
LLOYDMINSTER
PRINCE ALBERT
MELFORT
KINISTINO
TISDALE
CUTKNIFE
THE BATTLEFORDS
REDBERRY
ROSTHERN
WILKIE
SASKATOON COUNTY
VONDA
HUMBOLDT
WADENA
CANORA
BIGGAR
SASKATOON CITY
KERROBERT
PELLY
ROSETOWN
HANLEY
WYNYARD
KINDERSLEY
TOUCHWOOD
YORKTON
SALTCOATS
ELROSE
ARM RIVER
LAST MOUNTAIN
NORTH QU'APPELLE
PHEASANT HILLS
HAPPYLAND
THUNDER CREEK
LUMSDEN
SOUTH QU'APPELLE
MOOSOMIN
SWIFT CURRENT
MORSE
MOOSE JAW CITY
REGINA CITY
PIPESTONE
MAPLE CREEK
FRANCIS
MOOSE MOUNTAIN
MILESTONE
MOOSE JAW COUNTY
CANNINGTON
CYPRESS
NOTUKEU
WILLOW BUNCH
BENGOUGH
WEYBURN
ESTEVAN
SOURIS

(Source: *Legislative Directory*, p. 164.)

Map 5: THE ELECTIONS OF 1921, 1925 AND 1929


ILE a la CROSSE
CUMBERLAND
TURTLEFORD
JACK FISH LAKE
SHELLBROOK
PRINCE ALBERT
MELFORT
LLOYDMINSTER
KINISTINO
CUTKNIFE
THE BATTLEFORDS
REDBERRY
TISDALE
ROSTHERN
WILKIE
BIGGAR
SASKATOON COUNTY
VONDA
HUMBOLDT
WADENA
CANORA
PELLY
KERROBERT
SASKATOON CITY
ROSETOWN
HANLEY
WYNYARD
KINDERSLEY
TOUCHWOOD
YORKTON
ARM RIVER
LAST MOUNTAIN
SALTCOATS
ELROSE
NORTH QU'APPELLE
HAPPYLAND
THUNDER CREEK
PHEASANT HILLS
LUMSDEN
MORSE
SWIFT CURRENT
SOUTH QU'APPELLE
WOLSELEY
REGINA CITY
MOOSOMIN
MOOSE JAW CITY
GRAVELBOURG
MAPLE CREEK
MILESTONE
FRANCIS
PIPESTONE
MOOSE JAW COUNTY
NOTUKEU
CANNINGTON
CYPRESS
WILLOW BUNCH
BENGOUGH
WEYBURN
ESTEVAN
SOURIS

(Source: *Legislative Directory*, p. 165.)